Narrative techniques in Deshpande’s novels

Narratology is a particular way of appreciative narrative which is developed out of structuralism and Russian Formalism. As Herman says, Narratology is a ‘study of narrative’. The term ‘Narratology’ refers to a particular period in the history of narrative analysis. The important characterize of Narratology is a systematic, thorough, and disinterested approach to the mechanics of narrative. In fact in Aristotle’s (384–322) Poetics (330), narrative is not considered explicitly rather it is perfectly fixed in the forms tragedy, comedy, and epic. The important foundation for Narratology is the work of Russian Formalism in the 1920s.

Structuralism grows out of the applications of parts of Ferdinand de Saussure’s Cours de Linguistique Générale (1916, course in general linguistics, 1959) to areas of the human sciences and to literary theory, especially narrative. The structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss adopts the procedure to interrogate the structure of myths. The methods of other Structuralist thinkers investigate narrative forms and literary analysts. In the late 1960s and early 1970s Narratology gets a smooth way for works. Currie correctly says in literary narratology that,

Whatever revolutionary moment Structuralist Narratology may have inhabited in its heyday in the 1960s, the impact of Narratological method was certainly greater in literary studies at large in the 1980s, when it was operating alongside new critical developments from deconstruction and various new historicisms, cultural materialism and rejuvenated Marxisms,

Narratology not only encourages the study of narrative in general but also grows out of the structuralist imperative to subject different forms to a ‘neutral’ method of questioning. Narratology takes encouragement from structuralism and, more broadly, the newly crystallizing field of ‘Semiotic’, the study of the sign in all its manifestations.

Narratology, in literary theory, is the study of narrative structure. Narratology looks at what narratives have in common and what makes one different from another.
Narrative techniques provide deeper meaning for the reader and help the reader use imagination to visualize situations. Narrative literary techniques are known as literary devices. Style, plot, and narrative perspective, or points of view are some of important literary techniques. Common techniques relevant to style or the language choose to tell a story, include metaphors, similes, personification, imagery, hyperbole, and alliteration.

Common techniques relevant to plot are ‘backstory’, ‘flashback’, ‘flash-forward’, and ‘foreshadowing’. ‘Backstory’ is used when the author feels it is important for the reader to know something that has happened prior to the actual events described in the narrative. ‘Flashback’ is used when the narrator or the main character takes the story back in time, and the events go back and forth between the past and the present. Two examples of this include the narratives from The Notebook and Forrest Gump. The narrators often jumped back and forth between several events that occurred in the past to the present. ‘Flash-forward’ is seen when the writer allows the reader to see future events. This might be something experienced by the character or it could be future circumstances and situations.

Common techniques relevant to narrative perspective are first person, second person, third person, and third-person omniscient. The common techniques relevant to plots are backstory, flashback, flash-forward, and foreshadowing.

Usually, narrative technique is different from each writer. It occupies a great significant in the novel. Indian writers in English generally apply a plain narrative or storytelling method to make their novels pragmatic or interesting. But for more credible and realistic, novelists employ the first person narrative techniques in their literary works. These types of narrative techniques sometimes fail to look deep into the mind and purpose of the rest of the characters. The exploit of a suitable technique was the major challenge to the Indian English novelists.

Shashi Deshpande, as a talented and truly powerful Indian women novelist in English literature, adopts the first and the third person narrative techniques. The novelist generally handles a fine narrative techniques and style in her novels in order to present her novels’ exciting and realistic presentation to her readers. Shashi
Deshpande uses a chronological way of narrative techniques to express her views. She is a talented writer who has explained every incident in a logical way.

Shashi Deshpande’s crafts of combination of the first person and the third person narrative and the flashback devices provide strength and realism to her novels. Shashi Deshpande also feels this technique is being comfortable to present the delineation of character and their inner psyche. For a question asked by Lakshmi Holmstorm in an interview as to how she has hit upon this technique, Shashi Deshpande replies,

The present is the third person and the past is the first person. I was doing throughout in the first. But that’s often a perspective I use in my short stories. I wanted to be more objective. So, then I tried it in the third. But it wouldn’t work at all. Yet I really needed to distance myself from the narrative in the present, otherwise it was going to be far intense. And then I read an American novel by Lisa Alther where she uses this method. And the minute I came across her novel I thoughtLet me admit it freely—Oh god, this is how I am going to do my novel. (23-24)

Shashi Deshpande’s this type of narration has been criticized by various critics and reviewers. They say that the first person combination with the person narrative technique sometimes creates confusion in the mind of readers. Sahshi Deshpande employs a very fantastic and realistic narrative technique in all of her eleven novels.

In *Roots and Shadow*, Deshpande evades the simple technique of straightforward narration and uses the flashback method to confine the attention of the reader. This novel deals with the woman protagonist, Indu a young woman writer’s painful self-analysis. Indu, who returns to her childhood home after a long gap of 15 years, finds her real ‘self’. Shashi Deshpande who has used many themes in the novel such as incompatible marriage, extra-marital relationship, seeking individuality and identity, these themes are beautifully interwoven into a one close—knit narrative by the novelist. The first chapter of the novel gets progress in the present and the following chapters go back in the past and the final chapter of the novel comes again
in the present. Critic Sharma Futehally comments her narrative technique and writes, “It is a device which is useful either when some element of suspense is needed. For this novel chronologically charity is essential as the reader already has to cope with an abundance of characters and their complex interactions” (77)

The entire novel is written in the first person narrative. The technique of the first person narrative probe deep into the mind of the protagonist Indu and expose her fears and frustrations. The technique later invites the praise of reviewers and critics. A famous reviewer Watson C. W. compares Shashi Deshpande to the master story teller Chekhov and he says,

Shashi Deshpande, in this novel at least, comes closest to that writer, and the tragic-comedy of The Cherry Orchard is constantly recalled in the description of the crumbling house and the squabbling of the family. The writing is beautifully controlled and avoids the temptation of sentimentality which the subject might suggest and again the control is reminiscent of Chekhov. (75)

Shashi Deshpande’s next novel is The Dark Holds No Terrors. It portrays the psychological problems faced by the woman protagonist, Saru. Here Sahsi Deshpande handles both the first and the third person narrative technique in the novel. By using the double narrative method, the novelist presents the inner conflict and inner self of the heroine Saru. In this novel, she shifts the narrative from the first person to the third person and the present with the past besides, her craft lies effortlessly through dreams, nightmares, flashback and reminiscences. Shashi Deshpande’s the successful narrative technique completes the task of giving a realistic portrayal of the mental trauma of the heroine Saru. In an interview, she tells how she has got an idea of using double narrative,

The present is in the third person and the past is in the first person. I was doing it, throughout in the first. But that’s often a perspective I use in short stories – I wanted to be more objective. So, then I did it in the third. But it wouldn’t work at all, yet I really need not distance myself from the narrative in the present, otherwise it was going to be far too
intense. And then I read an American novel by Lisa Alther where she uses this method. And the minute I came across her novel I thought let me admit it freely – Oh god, this is how I am going to do my novel.

(111)

*If I Die Today* and *Come Up and Be Dead* are different in genre, and hence, merit less space as they fall into the category of popular fiction with death, suspense and thrill as their chief elements. They do not address issues pertaining to Indian women. They fall in the category of Agatha Christie’s novels as Shashi Deshpande is much impressed by Agatha Christie’s writings coincidently.

The narrator of *If I Die Today* is also reading one of Christie’s popular novels. However, there are some significant differences in the writing of Christie and Shashi Deshpande. Elenore Geethamala observes,

Agatha Christie created characters and incidents through imaginations and builds the story where as Shashi Deshpande’s stories are from her experience she gained around her. She is of the opinion that her characters are not created like Agatha Christie’s. These were real people. It is indeed right to be called as campus fictions. She is mainly concerned with human relationships stressing more on the marginal voices – their concern with life and death that gives a philosophical mode to the novel. (59)

A.K. Singh also gives the similar opinion about Deshpande’s writing, as he says,

It is this assertion and celebration of life that makes Deshpande’s work different from popular writer – be it Agatha Christie or someone else, for novel as such is exploration of human situation and life in fictional terms with a rich imaginative fullness where the sole interest does not lie in the surprising turns of the plot and in mystery of – who dunit’ but in the life which it generates and in the active participation that it depicts. (61)
In the novel *If I Die Today* Deshpande uses the lucid and simple kind of language. The story moves naturally from scene to scene and from thought to thought. The writing is lyrical and poetic at times. She uses metaphors brilliantly in it.

*Come Up and Be Dead* is similar to *If I Die Today* in its subject matter and genre. Shashi Deshpande derived the title of the novel form Charles Dickens' novel *Our Mutual Friend*. Like *If I Die Today*, *Come Up and Be Dead* is also a different kind of novel as the incidents of murder and sexual exploitation of young girls living in a hostel is viewed by an average woman, and narrates the story. In this context, Rama Gautam opines,

This novel, typical to Shashi Deshpande’s style, but different from her other novels, explores the predicaments of men and women hailing from middle-class milieu. It may not offer a nail-biting thrill, nor conceal the murderer effectively till the end, but it traverses through psychological thoroughfares, letting the characters grow over the reader by throwing up conflicts that resemble Indian middle-class realities seen and felt through a woman’s gaze. (Gautam, 2005:145)

Shahsi Deshpande’s the next novel *That Long Silence*, is a story of Jaya a well educated, married, matured and a mother of two children. The novel is quite similar to Virginia Wolf’s ‘stream of consciousness technique’. Stream of consciousness is a narrative device that attempts to give the written equivalent of the character's thought processes. Stream-of-consciousness is a literary term which was first used in the late 19th century and employed to show subjective as well as objective reality. It reveals the character's feelings, thoughts, and actions, often following an associative rather than a logical sequence, without commentary by the author.

Stream-of-consciousness writing is generally considered as a special form of ‘interior monologue’ and is characterized by associative leaps in thought and lack of some or all punctuation. Both the Stream of consciousness and interior monologue are distinguished from dramatic monologue and soliloquy, where the speaker is addressing an audience or a third person, which are chiefly used in poetry or drama. In
stream of consciousness the speaker’s thought processes are more often depicted as overheard in the mind. It is primarily a fictional device.

The term was coined by the William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). This technique was brought to its highest point of development in Ulysses (1922) and Finnegans Wake (1939) by the Irish novelist and poet James Joyce. American novelist William Faulkner and British novelist Virginia Woolf also coined this term elaborately. Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway (1925) and To the Lighthouse (1927) are very skillfully imitated this term. Among this group of writers, Shashi Deshpande is also added in the list of used the term of Stream of consciousness in her novels. She handles this term in his award winning novel *That Long Silence*. Harmon-Holman Handbook says stream-of-consciousness novels share the following assumptions,

That the significant existence of human beings is to be found in their mental-emotional processes and not in the outside world, (2) that this mental-emotional life is disjointed and illogical, and (3) that a pattern of free psychological association rather than logical relation determines the shifting sequence of thought and feeling. (497)

Stream-of-consciousness, then, is a narrative technique predicated on the assumption that the interiority of characters - their thoughts - is of paramount importance. It follows, then, that a passage narrated by means of this approach will privilege the inner sense of the mind over the ‘outer sense’ of traditional exposition.

*That Long Silence* is a very complex novel; a woman’s suppression to progression is very obviously portrayed by the writer Shashi Deshpande in it. The novel plays a better part in the heroine’s mind through memories and recollections. The woman protagonist Jaya’s self analysis of her failures both in her married life and her writing profession attain a kind of catharsis. In the way the narrative of the novel is like an interior monologue. Critic Y.S. Sunita Reddy observes the narrative technique of the novel, “The narrative with its slow unknotted of memories and unraveling of the soul is like an interior monologue quite similar to the stream of consciousness technique employed by Virginia Woolf”. (81)
The novel, *The Binding Vine*, is a different kind of novel. This novel indicates the development in Shashi Deshpande’s narrative technique. The mode of narration of the novel is totally different from Shashi Deshpande’s earlier novels. Shashi Deshpande’s earlier novels such as *Roots and Shadows*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *That Long Silence* are developed by combination of the past with the present perfectly through dreams, nightmares, flashback, recollections and the simple third person narrative. However, in *The Binding Vine*, she presents three separate plots of different stories are interwoven. It brings three women, belonging different age group, social status and education, together. The whole story is narrated in the first person by Urmi, the woman protagonist of the novel. The novel proves Shashi Deshpande’s development. Jasbir Jain says about the novel that,

> The Biological-physiological core is the same; pain and mortality, suffering and oppression affects us in similar ways; social constructs and institutions also have developed along similar lines as family, marriage and patriarchy. But between this core of sameness and the appearance of sameness (indress, life styles and the rest, obliterating class differences) and the spread of information, which constitutes a common area of knowledge, there is a whole lot of difference, which works through myths, past histories, body language, gender and customs. (245)

*A Matter of Time* is a story dealing with the human predicament of three women belonging three generations of the same family. Shashi Deshpande brilliantly structures a pathetic story of deserted women in the patriarchal society. She implements the first person narrative technique in the novel. The mixer of the past and present, the flash back method are once again appeared in the novel. For the first time, Shashi Deshpande produces a man Gopal the protagonist of her novel. In the beginning of the novel, Gopal walks out on his family deserting his wife and three daughters. The theme of mother-daughter relationship is skillfully presented by Shashi Deshpande. Satire and irony are used in order to present the dilemma of Indian woman.
Sahshi Deshpande’s novel, Small Remedies, is a story that moves back and forth. It focuses on the life of Savitribai, Munni and the narrator Madhu. The novel deals with the different themes of Women’s rights, communal violence and motherhood. The structure of the novel is generally called by the critics that ‘a biography within a biography’. Shashi Deshpande skilfully presents the undrawn rules of Indian tradition, its culture, woman’s dilemma, and their struggle for freedom in the novel.

Shashi Deshpande’s style of double narration implies the internal and external conflict of Manjari’s life that eventually influences her present and future. Shashi Deshpande’s novel, Moving On, talks about family relationships, commitment and the generations. It deals with the story of a presentation of a personal diary of a dead man, read by his daughter Manjari. The novel moves on with the thoughts of the protagonist and her perspective about the past which consists of her parents, husband and children. Her usages of verbal ability to match the plot, easiness and command over the language are really wonderful and present amazing to the readers. Chanchala k.Naik observes, “In probing into the complex relationship within the family, Deshpande weaves her narrative around multiple acts of transgression while bringing into contestation self/other, man/woman, bone/body, physical/emotional, sexual/ethical, individual/social binaries” (218)

In the novel In the Country of Deceit Shashi Deshpande has used the technique of revisionist mythmaking. It is nothing but the rewriting a myth from a feminist perspective. This narrative type is often used to weaken the old story and in such a way to bring the woman’s experience and how that has been neglected in the Patriarchal society. Adrienne Rich says re-vision the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction is for women more than a chapter in cultural history. It is an act of survival.

The novel explores man-woman relationship like her previous novels. It brings a fresh perspective of an illicit love-affair between two adults, a married man and an unmarried woman. The main aim of revisionist rewriting of myths is to correct the false gender descriptions that inherent in them. In the novel, Shashi Deshpande
handles the themes of adult-love and the lovers’ desire, guilt, deceit, and sexual relationship outside marriage. The protagonist Devayani is the narrator of the story. Through the form of letters from some characters Deshpande perhaps to fill out other characters and their point of view. Shahsi Deshpande’s first person narrative technique presents the heart of the protagonist Devayani’s inner thoughts clearly.

Shahsi Deshpande’s writing is spontaneous. She does not belong any movement or for any particular country or group of people. She writes because it comes to her naturally. She says openly in an interview with Vanamala Vishwanath that,

No, I don’t believe in making it obviously Indian. But all this is basically because I’m isolated- I’m not part of any movement and conscious of readers to impress. To get wider recognition here and abroad, you have to in the university and places like that with the right contact. I’m an ordinary woman who writes sitting at home. None of these things are within my reach. This has, I believe, done me good; it has given me great freedom. I’m happy with this anonymity. Once you get publicity-conscious, your writing becomes affected. I’m truly happy with this freedom. (11)

Shahsi Deshpande uses satire and irony or humour in her all novels. The flashes of irony and satire in her novels do not seem to be included intentionally by her. She makes use of the Indian myth from Ramayana and Mahabharata in her novels. But she does not believe that myth is used as a literary device.

Besides narrative technique her style of writing is the most challenging task in writing novels in English. The problem of writing novels in foreign language generates from the great difference between the Indian and the Western cultures. Like the earlier Indian English writers who used the English language according to their talent, Shashi Deshpande also writes in this language to give voice to women’s problems. As the novelist comes from a middle class, Marathi-Cannada background, and she finished her education in English at a local school in Dharwad, Karnataka, her vast interest in reading helps her to write fluentcey. It is these influences which have played an
important role in shaping her writing and the use of the English language. She has also used some words of Marathi language to bring the authentic sense to readers.

Shashi Deshpande feels that writing in English is a disadvantage in this country because it makes unfriendly the writer from the main-stream. But she considers English as one of the Indian languages. So, she says that,

I believe that English writing in this country is a part of our literatures; I consider English as one more of our bhāshas as Ganesh Devy calls them. I know our writing comes out of an involvement comes out of our experiences here. Our relationship is now here, and happily our publishers are here as well. Yet I am disturbed by the recent trend in English writing which in its pursuits of role models outside, is alienating itself from its roots. (108)

Shashi Deshpande was fully conscious of the problems which Indian writers in English face at every time. She has the opinion that according to the context a writer can develop a language of their own; this will remain distinctively Indian, and yet be English. She has always aimed at the Indian readers and not the Western. In fact, Shahsi Deshpande’s creative use of the language has been greatly admired by the reader and the critics.

She handles the Indian women’s issues in her novels and short stories. Thus, she is ever vigilant to the issues associated with the contemporary society, and she progresses a literary skill that enables her to present them realistically and convincingly. It is agreeable that, Shahsi Deshpande’s style of writing is very straightforward and simple for her reader. In her narrative technique of all novels, she makes a combination of the first person and the third person narrative coupled with flashback devices to present the credibility and authenticity of her novels. Shahsi Deshpande’s narrative technique and style of writing is developed novel after another novel it is not exagreated if Shahsi Deshpande is a very mature and renowned novelist in the Indian English literature.
Conclusion

Shashi Deshpande has raised many queries and created awareness, throughout her novels, about the problems of women who have been suppressed by the male dominated society for many centuries. The main important characteristics of her novels are that it does not look up male as culprit or not express her anger or rage towards them. Men are in her novels absent or dead. Monohar (*A Dark Holds No Terrors*), Jayant (*Roots and Shadow*), Mohan (*That Long Silence*), Prem (*If I Die Today*), Kishore (*The Binding Vine*), Som (*Small Remedies*) are absent or else concern lesser than the female protagonists. Shyam (*Moving On*) is dead. For the first time the novelist uses Gopal the male protagonists in her novel *Matter of Time*. But in it too she makes him absent in the sense of Gopal’s denouncement.

This is because the writer’s motivation is fully around the women and their predicaments. In Fact, the writer does not deliberately omit or avoid them even the writing of her is not find fault of the patriarchal culture that subjugates women. But, by her literary works, Shashi Deshpande has given voice to women to communicate themselves and to find a place in the society. That is for the main purpose she presents women as central position and concentrates her energy only on knowing about them.

Shashi Deshpande, by introducing the modern middle class female protagonists in her novels, portrays the middle class and the middle class people’s life. Shashi Deshpande presents women protagonists who are roughly between the ages of thirty and thirty-five. Most of them are married women, even though they do not always succeed, they are in search of some kind of independence, self-identity, economic independence and individual independence throught out the novel.

As Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists are adults, their relationships mainly concern the parents, siblings, partners, spouse, lover and husband. Presenting these women as wives seems to be the dominant concern of the novelist but almost all the protagonists like Sarita, Manju, Devyani, Indu, Jaya, Urmi, Sumi, Madhu, Manjari, Devi and Aru turn to their past at some critical moments to reflect on their
relationships with their parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, friends and neighbours and redefine their relationships in the changed context. Shashi Deshpande’s this deliberate crowd of other women as in the name of aunts, cousins, mothers, mother-in-law, friends and acquaintances is to show how they suppressed by the patriarchal society and become the victims of an widespread imbalance between male power and female powerlessness within marriage. Shashi Deshpande in this way extends the scope of human relationships and gives due importance to the role of other characters, male or female.

Husband and wife are quite important in her novels because they play the most dominant role in the traditional structure of Indian families, but the eldest persons in the class of grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts not only play a significant role in shaping their personality in their early years but also represent the traditional value system prevailing in different generations. Siblings, cousins, other relatives, neighbours, colleagues, etc. are minor figures and they also play a significant role in determining the lives of the major characters as friends and companions and rivals and supporters and provide foils to them. Moreover, there are children of the protagonists, their sons and daughters, to add the needed dimension to their lives and relationships and complete the picture of human relationships.

In Indian society, woman is variously presented as a mother, wife, daughter and sister even goddess. Though women in ancient period and ‘Veda periods’ considered as equal as men, and in ‘Manusmruti’ and ‘Dharma shastras’ have laid down specific rules for the conduct of women, then slowly women are treated to secondary position in all walks of life. But after the independence, the status of women has improved to some extent, particularly in urban areas. The literacy rate of women has improved. Now a day, women are holding top positions in education, business and politics. However, things have not changed for the majority of women, particularly in rural areas. Though many reformists movement and awareness create by the welfare of women activists and feminists, they are still given secondary status in household, offices, social and public places. Women are exploited and harassed in Indian society.
Shashi Deshpande shows the real picture of Indian modern middle class women’s position in her novels. She not only presents the women of her contemporary generation but also presents the earlier generation too. It is because to display how they were in a terrible condition, thoroughly subjugated and dominated by men and also how they were treated as their personal possessions. It shows on the maturity of Shashi Deshpande and her determination to express her views about women’s condition in her predecessor period. She also describes how Indian women are suppressed in the name of marriage, sex & love and how they design by myths as a suppressed figure.

The second and third chapters depict the predicaments of women and their seeking escaping ways respectively. The application of psychoanalytical feminist theory aids to analysis Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists’ psyche obviously. It is also useful to delineate her women characters and describe their psychological problems in a realistic way. Keren Horney’s theory of neurosis and the self - analyses applications are useful to find out Shashi Deshpande’s female characters neurosis and their steps to escape from their predicaments and their self realization that helps them to reunits with their family again and it is described perfectly in the fourth chapter.

The implementation of Julia Kristea’s theory of semeiotic and abjection are helpful to describe the importants of women writings and the importanace of mother. And the theories of Freud, Lacan, Irrigary, Simon de Beavuior and Julia Mitchell’s are also supportive to understand the women thoroughly. By analyzing Shashi Deshpande’s women characters biologically, linguistically, psychologically and culturally it has been proved that though on its surface, her writing looks similar to that of men’s, it is different in content, perceptions, terms of symbols, signs, social meanings, images, similes and metaphors.

The complete study of Shashi Deshpande’s novels exposes her deep approaching of the predicaments of modern educated Indian women who suffer the suffocate feeling that granted to them in the name of culture and tradition in the male-dominated society. She describes her women characters in the light of their expectations, panic, desires and dissatisfactions. Though they are conscious of their
strengths and margins, they find themselves frustrated by the opposition and demands from social conditions tremendously by the patriarchal attitude. Shashi Deshpande emphasizes their inferior position of their living place and the consequent humiliation in a patriarchal society.

Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists are generally become the victims of the customary sexual discrimination, first as daughters in their parental home and then as wives in their marital home. The beauty of Shashi Deshpande’s heroines is they are aware of the great social disparity and bias towards them and conscious how the norms and rules of this male dominated society limit their capability and mould them to exist as a perfect wife. They struggle against the oppressive and inequality nature of the societal norms and rules.

Shashi Deshpande’s works have attained immense critical attentions and her realistic representation of the Indian middle class women is approved for her sensitive mind. The genuine concern for women and their suppression is reflected very powerfully in all her works. As her novels are delineating women and the story weaves around women - centered, make one to think whether Shashi Deshpande is a feminist. But in an interview with Sree, Deshpande says that,

I am a feminist, I’m a very staunch feminist in my personal life…cruelty and oppression should not be there between the two genders, this is my idea of feminism. I am feminist very much and I strongly react against any kind of cruelty or oppression, decimal of opportunities to women because they are women … the important thing is we have the right to live ourselves. (22)

Shashi Deshpande’s all of her eleven novels are based on women and in all the novels’ protagonists are women. Saru (The Dark Holds No Terrors) is a doctor, Indu (Roots and Shadows) is a journalist, Kshama (If I Die Today) is a Headmistress, Manju (Come Up and Be Dead) is a lecturer, Jaya (That Long Silence) a housewife and a creative writer, Urmia (The Binding Vine) a college teacher, Sumi (A Matter of Time)
teacher (though she is a housewife at the beginning she takes up a job later), Madhu, (Small Remedies), is a journalist and a writer, Manjari (Moving On) is a professionist, Devyani (In the Country of Decit) is a teacher and writer, and Aru (The Shadow Play) is a lawyer respectively. Shashi Deshpande, through her novels and by her protagonist, believes that the educated and the creative women always free themselves at first and then contribute to other women’s liberation both dynamically and intensely. They are not only self-dependent but also progressive.

Shashi Deshpande knits the psychological plot of female suppression in all her novels and offers way out to liberate or progress them. She points out one by one of the women’s suppression which are numerous in the patriarchal society. She presents the main problems of the economic independence and role exchange, sexual difference, marital bond, matital rape and rape outside, conflict between what she desires but she acquires in her real life, womanhood, motherhood, frustrated marital life, pathetic situation of widows and women’s creativity in her novels.

She also handles how these problems are function as the chief factors as they are the pathetic situation of women in the patriarchal Indian society. It is true that women are suppressed by these factors in the man dominated society. But Shashi Deshpande presents her heroines with their strong strength of mind and will power to come out from all sufferings and establish their individuality along with their self identity and ‘March forwards’ to the path of progression.

Economic independence and role reverse are generally important issues which are often liable for the pathetic situation of women especially the educated modern women. In the patriarchal society women are brought up to dependent on men (father, husband and brother) as they are the highest authority in the family. But when women become economically independent and earn bread and butter particularly after marriage, it generates inferiority complex to men.

Shashi Deshpande, in her novel The Dark Holds No Terrors, shows the female protagonist Saru how she becomes the worst victim of such beliefs as she is not only the
winner of the bread and butter but also the superior to her husband. Shashi Deshpande beautifully weaves the position of economically independent wife and her mental turmoil here in the novel. She delineates how the mind of inferior husband wants to control wife’s superiority and try to retain her manhood status in the traditional based Indian society.

Shashi Deshpande has picked up the predominat issue of marital rape and rape outside marriage in all most many of her novels. According to Shashi Deshpande this is the foremost important issue for the female subjugation. Shashi Deshpande very elaborately declares to the world that how the heroine Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors becomes the object of her husband Manu’s sexual sadism. Manu almost becomes mad as he is insignificant by the society but at the same time her wife Saru grows as a popular lady doctor and attains socially influence.

Manu is unable to accept his lower social position and he thinks it may turn him completely unidentity to the society. So he wrongly thinks that he can retain his position in society if he starts assaulting his wife at night. But it consequently changed Saru’s life becomes a hell. Manu feels insult and insecure because of the rising status of his wife Saru. He mentally affects by the wife’s improvement and his inferiority complex. He seeks a way to dominate her. As sex is considered the man’s weapon and marriage is a license to use the weapon on wife, Manu chooses the weapon sex to wound her Saru’s pride. At the same time Saru is also aware of the fact that she is superior to her husband in the education and social status. Saru, who is being an unwanted child to her parents in her childhood, takes over a psychology which does not allow her to anger to her husband rather she prepares herself to go on enduring everything.

Actually Manu’s sadism brusts out when he is asked by a reporter that how does he feels her wife’s ‘bread winner of the family’. Since money is the only factor to lead sophisticated life to Manu, he can’t say Saru to leave her profession. In fact the wife who brings money is kept as a hen that lays golden eggs in the patriarchal society. Manu, who rather to raise her status high or as equal as Saru, wants to dominate her wife. He becomes a complete sadist and tortures Saru at every night in bed. Her dream
of a happy married life is totally shattered. She starts to get fear the dark that overcome her entirely and becomes totally terror and tension. It is the main cause decides Saru to leave her husband’s house and seek a place for solace. It is the real position of each working woman in the male dominated society. The modern Indian educated woman’s role is nothing less than walking on the knife that sharps at both sides. Shashi Deshpande, realizing this fact, advises to the future wives through the character Saru who delivers a speech in Nalu’s college that,

A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband … That’s the only rule to follow if you want a happy marriage. Don’t even try to reverse the doctor - nurse, executive-secretary, principal-teacher role … women’s magazines will tell you that a marriage should be an equal partnership. That’s nonsense. Rubbish. No partnership can be equal. It will always be unequal, but take care that it’s unequal in favour of your husband. If the scales tilt in your favour, God help you, both of you.

(DHINT 124)

Shashi Deshpande focuses in the novel on woman’s awareness of her predicament her desire to have a self-sufficient social image. She supports for woman’s voice and establishes that woman too has choices in their life. At the end of the novel, the writer by using the concept that ‘My life is my own’ brings individuality to each woman’s life. Saru who at first expects ‘a room of one’s own’ as Virginia Woolf quotes, later believes that any violent move to go against the hierarchical role placed before her as a woman is bound to fail. As Betty Friedan in the Secon sex asserts that, “For woman, as for man, the need for self - fulfillment - autonomy, self-realization, independence, individuality, self - actualization is as important as the sexual need, with as serious consequences, when it is thwarted” (282).

She reacts against the traditional concept of society that single purpose of a woman is to please the elders and especially the male ones. Through the character Saru the novelist wants to project the post modern dilemma of a woman who strongly resents the attack on her individuality and identity. Here the aggression is faced mainly from
two persons. One is Saru's mother and other is Saru's husband Manu. Both of them represent the values and norm established by the patriarchal society. She wants to be a strong woman in all the three angels, biological, psychological and social in the end of the novel. She identifies herself with the roles fulfilled. She decides to cut off the traditional bonds of marriage and home and walks into the wide world. It is her complete realization of her self potential in which the consideration of family society and personal relationship assume a pigmy position. She declares that,

My life is my own … somehow she felt as if she had found it now, the connecting link. It means you are just as a strutting grimacing puppet, standing futilely on the stage for a brief while between areas of darkness. If I have been clinging to the tenuous shadow of a marriage substance has long since disintegrated because I have been afraid of proving mother right. (DHNT 220)

Saru refuses to face her husband in the beginning, after her realization, she decides to face him and so she asks her father to tell Manu to wait. The writer shows this sign as her capacity to assert her rights. The novel expresses the revitalization of the female protagonist Saru’s individuality. Shashi Deshpande slowly reveals Saru’s realization of how she has been a puppet and suppressive figure of the male dominated society and how her self analysis helps her to understand her own individuality.

Shashi Deshpande ends up the novels with the certainty that how Saru is no longer be a victim of Manu’s aggravations and strange behaviour. She gets satisfaction in her professional success and decides not to feel responsible for Manu’s failure. Through the character Saru, Shashi Deshpande points out that the essence of any marriage is mutual understanding and mutual respect and not subjugation of one by the other. S.P. Swain in The Fiction of Shashi Deshpande correctly observes Saru’s feminity and says that, “Saru’s journey is a journey from self - alienation to self-identification, from negation to assertion, from difference to confidence. She learns to trust her feminine self” (39).
Shashi Deshpande rightly exhibits that Saru’s rebel against tradition but with her conscious she finally tries to compromise with the existing reality. This is because, she lives in transitional society. She passes from the false impression to actuality, from annoyance to submission and at the end she comes around and makes an ultimate attempt to reunite herself.

The novel *If I Die Today* is an element of detective fiction, Shashi Deshpande presents the common predicaments of the sexual difference by the character Mirga and also deals with the protagonist Manju’s sufferings from the male-dominant society. Sexual difference is a common touch in all of Shashi Deshpand’s novels. Saru, Indu, Mirga, Sonali, Kshima, Devyani, Jaya, Sumi, Kalpana, Aru, Manjari and the minor women characters of her novels are all become the victims of the gross gender discrimination.

Shashi Deshpande presents how to overcome the societal disparity by the characters of her female protagonists and at the same time she also presents by the character of Mirga to say indirectly that the societal inequality will swallow the woman if she is not realize her real self potential. Mriga is a 14 year old girl. Her father, Dr. Kulkarni, comes into sight modern and westernized, yet he is apprehended by the Hindu desire for a son, and never excuses Mriga for being a daughter, her mother appears a sad suppressed creature and weak to provide Mriga the support and love. As Keren Horney says the reaction of the unwanted child neurosis effects either idealized self image or self hatred, here Mirga starts to hate her self image and contempt her life as she becomes a girl and be an unwanted child to her parents. She faces death atlast.

Manju, the narrator of the story, is a young college lecturer. She is married to a doctor and leads a peaceful life in the campus of a big medical college and hospital. She lives with Prem as an example of a good couple. They are intellectual and sexually satisfied and does not fall any extra-marital relationships. One day Manju reveals her love affair with Rajiv to Prem. The affectionate husband Prem on hearing Manju’s pre marital love he cannot accept her as a truthful wife. He starts to hate her. He detaches himself form Manju even she is on pregnant. However, after many years of living
together, Manju realizes later that she has failed to know Prem completely. She feels that she knows his body, but fails to understand his mind. Even they are educated, intellectual and socially influential, their relation is based on the requirement of body and domestic comforts only. They do not attain the complete union of mind and body.

Prem, who often proves himself as an ordinary patriarchal Indian male hurts Manju by pointing her pre-marital relationship with her lover Rajiv. Manju is forced to prove her honesty. She feels sorry for herself for her discomposure to about her affair with Rajiv before marriage to Prem. She feels that her husband Prem would understand her situation and honesty if she reveals her relationship with Rajiv and also she doesn’t think that Prem would mistake her as he is a good natured intellectual person. But Prem seems resentful and like an ordinary middle-class Indian males, Prem feels aggravated and becomes suspicious after listening his wife’s affair with Rajiv before marriage.

The arrival of Guru who is a terminal cancer patient disturbs the lives of the doctors and their families. The old secrets are revealed. Two people’s murder and the tensions around the families who are living in campus and the uncovered culprit are surprising scenes that leads the reader to the world of unknown. Manju’s pregnancy gives her the opportunity to find out the attitude of men in the campus. This novel once again proves the cruel disparity of unwanted female child from the character Mirga and the dominate attitude of men in the character of Prem. Even Mirga and Manju both are being in the male dominated society Mirga fails to realize her self potential so she becomes the prey to the patriarcha society but Shashi Deshpande’s heroine Manju realizes her true self individuality and starts to change her supression to progression.

The novel *Come Up and Be Dead* is a psychological thriller story. In this novel Shashi Deshpande exhibits the flexibility of her award winning literary talents. She introduces spinsters Kshama and Devyani’s life exclusively in the male dominated society. The suicide of a school going girl and two more deaths follow make the school a hot bed of fear and suspicion. Kshama’s stiffness and her talent to solve the problem are presented very skillfully. At one situation Kshama cannot deal with, especially when the rumour is followed by rumours pointing at her brother. The chain of events slowly
change Kshama’s attitude and towards the end she realizes the requirement of human
relation and emotional attachments which are essential to life. She also realizes the
requirement of break the inflexible wall of constrained beliefs.

Kshama and Devyani live as spinster with their own beliefs. In the course of
time, they slowly attain their identity by watching and observing the changing attitude
around them. The experiences of their life have taught them to lose stubbornness and
comprehend the importance of family and social attachment. Devayani’s homecoming
and Khama’s adoption of Sonali mean how their inner change helps them to a start
afresh life.

Devyani, the housekeeper of the Head Mistress Kshama, suggests a plan behind
it at all and wants to stop so she accepts an invitation then. In addition Shashi
Deshpande has touched the difficulties of spinsters’ life; she exhibits the women’s inner
world and also presents the character Mrs.Jyothi Raman who becomes the victim of her
husband’s brutal rape at the very first night of her marriage. Thus, in this novel Shashi
Deshpande says the women’s biological abusement and the sexual aggrestion of men.
The novel finish with the realization of Kshama and Devyani that without the bond
family there is no happy. Shashi Deshpande presents the poewrful Head Mistress
Kshama and her skills to solve the problems are really meritorious.

In Roots and Shadows, Indu suffers great mental ordeal both of her childhood
days and marital relationship with her husband. Jayant is no different from the other less
educated and traditional Indian men when he enacts in the role of a husband.
Meanwhile Indu comes to know the depressed troubles of her Kakies, atyas and the
painful description of Akka’s child marriage. That discloses the miserable condition of
Indian traditional women’s position. By presenting the married lives of Indu’s aunts
and other relations, Shashi Deshpande has astonishingly presented the inferior status of
women.

Indu, an educated, rebellious and a liberal woman, realizes bitter experience
from her marital bond and finds no different from her numerous illiterate women and
village based aunts at her parental home. Without knowing herself, Indu becomes a victim like their aunts of the patriarchal society. As said earlier in this chapter Shashi Despande does not make any assault on the male or masculine world because she is not a feminist in an aggressive and militant sense. She has been maintaining and developing a very balanced kind of vision, a vision that is that home is where one starts from, and that the happiest kind of home is one which rests upon liberal or liberalized domesticity. It is this kind of domesticity that holds the key to Shashi Despande’s image of a perfect household, and it is essentially for this very reason that Indu has been made to realize this truth after so many turns and twists in her life.

Woman’s sexual humiliation is presented very elegantly in the novel. In extra marital relationship, Naren is no longer stay in her memory. But it is true that Naren’s relationship and his solace talk with Indu help her to realize her fault. Indu tells every detail of her married life to Naren. According to Indu, Naren is so natural to ease and compatibility development between the two. Naren’s a brief moment of sympathy make Indu slip into extra - marital relationship with Naren and she doesn’t feel of guilt despite of this disloyal slip rather she learns to take a rational set where her marriage with Jayanth is troubled. She also realizes how she herself has cheated that her life with Jayant is happy in front of others and to Jayant. This realization helps her to understand her real behaviour with her husband. She feels Jayant is innocent and decides to go back to him.

She realizes that she mistakenly blames for the marital conflict in her lives. She accepts that she has creates a hell out of the heaven. She thinks she “had locked herself in as cage and thrown the keys” (RS 85). She feels her foolishness that how she has forgotten the roots and escaped from familial responsibilities of the home, chasing after one obscure shadows Indu slowly learns to see not only her life that should be full of possibilities for growth and grace but the very meaning of life itself. With this total understanding Indu decides to go back to Jayant. She also realizes that Akka is not a sadist. Indu has faced her real self and she knows her roots. She is in the situation of taking decisions not only for herself but for others too because life does not come to an
end with individuals alone. This realization makes Indu to decide to reunite with her husband.

The novel ends with the realization of Indu that Jayant, her husband, need not establish or limit her sphere of activity. She further decides not to submit herself to anyone’s dictates, not to get influenced by her husband in career matters. This shows that she is making independent decisions, and matures into an individual who chooses to live life in accordance with her own wishes, in a bold and challenging woman of determination. She wipes out all feminine limitations and also acquires the power to change others. Thus she moves on the way of progression.

In That Long Silence, Jaya’s troubles in marriage and her role of a subservient wife is depicted by Shashi Deshpande. Jaya follows her husband when threatening charges of corruption chases him. He expects Jaya to keep silent but at the time wants her to tell solution for his problem. Jaya cannot understand his state of mind. At one time when she, without her sense denies obeying Mohan’s words, he gently leaves her alone and walks out of the house. Jaya is depressed as she follows traditional version of ‘Sita’ and ‘Savitri’ role and believes husband is like a ‘sheltering tree’ to wife, she fails to walk along to what her mind says. Jaya’s constant self realization helps her to disclose the cause for the miserable married life. She comprehends the penalties of concealed annoy. Her silence is also the reason for her suppressed anger. Her thorough understanding that both the silence and the lack of communication are the cause of marital incompatibility helps her to break her long silence in order to renovate peace and happiness. She realizes at the end how she and her children are unsheltered and insecure.

Shashi Deshpande, in this novel, breaks the silence of Jaya and converts her from her exile by giving a new lease of life. She leads the reader to the privacy of Jaya and her inner mind to analyze the inner turmoil of Indian woman. Shashi Deshpande, by allowing Jaya to realize that the mistake is her’s and establishes her identity by being bold, gives an optimistic message through these words of Jaya, “We don’t change
overnight … but we can always hope. Without that, life would be impossible” (TLS 187). This change and hope give new confidence and bring Jaya the emancipation.

In *The Binding Vine*, Shashi Deshpande takes the issues of rape and marital rape. Like Saru, Mira, the mother-in-law of Urmi, suffers from sexual assault at every night by her husband silently. Kalpana, the daughter of Shakutai and the victim of brutal rape, is in serious condition at hospital. The story of the novel rounds amidst Mira, Kalpana and the protagonist Urmi. Urmi’s is portrayed as a redeemer of the victim Mira and Kalpana. For Urmi’s help, both of victims’ sufferings are come to know the world. By publishing Mira’s poems and helping to arrest the rapist who raped Kalpana, Urmi enacts as a rescuer.

In *The Binding Vine* Shashi Deshpande presents Mira’s marital rape as a terrible crime. The novelist through her novels says marital rape makes the women’s life of miserable but the society does not pay attention to it. Mira finds very difficult to live her life but she turns writing poetry and finds a relief from it. Her poetry expresses not only her sufferings but also the pain and tumult of her that she faces at every night. Mira is brutally raped day after day like the character Saru in the *Dark Holds No Terrors*.

Shashi Deshpande presents the pain and agony of the rape through the character Kalpana in *The Binding Vine*. Kalpana is the unfortunate daughter of Shakutai who becomes a prey to the cruel lust of a man. Sulu’s husband Prabhakar not only rapes her but almost kills her. Kalpana undergoes in a state of comma in the hospital. Shashi Deshpande leaves the character without giving any hints of her recovering or dead. Shashi Deshpande’s presentation of these characters is to express the life that is how difficult to survive and manage the ill-fated situation by her and her mother Shakutai.

The story exhibits how the middle-low class people especially detested by their husbands and having female children get suffering to lead an honest life. Having a meagre wages Shakutai gets very difficult to take care of her family and her daughters. She cannot come regulary to hospital as she is doing daily wages to run her family. If she comes to hospital daily she has to leave her work and also she has to leave her
wages. This is very important as it is the only source to survive of her family. Kalpana’s rape is a prestige issue to Shakutai. She, rather than finds the culprit and punish him, wants to hide the rape for family honour.

Here, Shashi Deshpande points out how the society points out the victim of the rape who is the main cause of this bad situation and leaves the man who attacked her because man has the rights to fulfil his sexual desire openly but the woman has to preserve herself from the eye of man and avoid to be glomourous. In marriage it becomes worse men openly lead the women to pleasure of his physical needs. Even if a woman is unwilling, her permission is taken for granted. Mira and Saru have to quiet down the lust of their husband. Jaya and Indu have to yield before the dictates of their husband.

A woman can have no freedom even to display her feelings in the rightful relationship where she can ask for physical satisfaction and she cannot admit it that she needs her husband for love-making as Urmila craves for Kishore, Sumi for Gopal and Manju for Prem. Jaya once allows her need but Mohan is shocked as Jayant does to Indu. Sumi wants to write a story about female’s statute for sexual pleasure. Shashi Deshpnade presents Sumi in a sense of a modern emancipated woman. She with dare accepts the fact about female hungers. It is possible to her as she knows about the society and its large consideration of it as a sin.

Even Urmila herself has grief-sicken for losing her one year old female baby Aru and her husband’s absence; she causally overcome the problem by helping other women. Indu of Roots and Shadows and Jaya of That Long Silence are fulfilled individuals. It is because both of them attempt to write, face confrontation and find the power to decide what they want to write. But Urmila, unlike these protagonists, draws society's attention to her protest. At last, Urmila is seen to recall the bonds of love that provide the survival to human beings. Urmila is not a rebel against the contemporary system because she believes in whole-heartily that things are slowly improving though at a slow pace.
In *A Matter of Time* Shashi Deshpande’s another novel where in the husband Gopal walks out on his family leaving his wife and three daughters. Sumi, is quite shocked that she floast into entire silence but, actually she tries hard to keep her family normal for her three daughters. Gopal’s abandonment is a cause for great embarrassment and mental distress for Sumi. She suffers more whenever she happens to think a bitter realization of being unwanted. She digests harsh and humiliation words of her relations and words of sympathy from her mother and daughter too makes her to console. She appears as fully a self-respecting woman. She takes up a job for herself and her daughters.

In this novel Shashi Deshpande presents mother role as warm and affectionate to her daughter Sumi. Kalayi doesn’t get a warm and friendly relationship with her mother Manorama and even when Shripathi abonds her that time too she keeps quite and not say any console but Kalyani, when Gopal walks out on Sumi, shows her full concern on her daughter Sumi. Gopal’s walks out appears to Kalyani like a reenactment of her own life, but unlike her mother, she gives emotional support to her daughter. She supports her grand daughters too. She says to Aru, “My mother did not care for my children either. Daughters again, she said … I am luckier than my mother. She is the one unlucky who didn’t know how to enjoy her children and grand children” (BV 226).

Kalyani’s this positive approach creates a thought to Sumi that she has a life for herself and her daughters. She feels that she has many tasks to accomplish for herself and for her daughters. She chooses a job for economic balance and learns to ride scooter to avoid depending others in that way at last Sumi becomes new as she walks over the predicaments and she emerges as a progressive free woman. Even though Deshpande shows, at the end of the novel, as the protagonist Sumi dead, her empowerment shines out through the character of Kalyani and Aru. In this novel Shashi Daespande says life is mortal but courage, confidence and determinism are immortal. Kalyani and Aru are the symbol of courage and determinism.

The novel *Small Remedies* is a story of Madhu a victim of double standards of society. Right from her childhood onward Madhu has sensed the offensive gender
discrimination in the society which draws rules and laws favor of men and against for women. She leads her life alone after her father’s death. She gets totally alienated by her husband Som after she frankly reveals him about her intercourse with her father’s friend before marriage. Even Som has himself had an experienced physical relation with another married woman before marriage; he cannot accept his wife’s single act intercourse with another man. She gets a great trauma because of her husband’s desertion and her only son Adit’s premature death. While narrating the tragic tale of Savitribai Indoreker a musician, and Leela a politician she realizes the real meaning of life.

She further understands, in the journey of search for identity, SavitriBai rejects everything for instance her respectable family, comforts, even her own daughter Munni, and achieves name and fame as a popular Hindustani classical singer. On the other hand Munni, denies her fondness for music and her imposed identity as a neglect daughter of famous singer, Savitribai. She wants to become a middle class housewife. For this purpose she denies her vocal talent and ability. She rejects all that are associated with her mother, music, name and fame. Through her self-earned new identity as Shailaja Joshi, Munni sought the safe comfort of conventionality.

Madhu, by realizing Bai, Munni and Leela how they get the victims of the gross gender discrimination realize her own self-realization. The self realization of Madhu, Munni, Bai and Leele help them in discovering their identity and ‘self’. It also helps to take decision to live self satisfactory and self identity. She thinks how they go on with the dying desire towards their achievements and facing the hardships while life threw upon them and how even they never look back.

They, by passing through the alienation, rebellion and aggression, achieve their dream of being a ‘Progressive’ woman. Madhu at the end completely realizes that how they struggle to own dreams and learn how to realize those dreams despite social barriers. Women, though talented and gifted with courage, are difficult to achieve what they desire unless they realize their inner strength. Madhu who realizing her real inner
strength and taking her life as sportive, she prepares herself to live her remaining life in a progressive way.

*Moving On* is a story that begins with a woman protagonist’s discovery of her father’s diary. As Manjiri, opens the past through its pages releasing old memories and recasting events and responses, the present makes its own demands: a rebellious daughter. Manjari becomes alienated and surrounded by strangers after the death of her parents. She becomes a widow at her very young age. She breaks the idea that a young woman cannot live without the support of a man. She installs a computer at home and types the manuscripts for her earning. She becomes a self employee. She doesn’t like to depend on any man for her support or her economic and physical existence. Trayee Sinha in *A study of shashi Deshpande’s women characters: Feminism in search of identity* says that,

In this novel ‘Moving on’ Manjari’s sexuality is explicitly portrayed. Manjari like Deshpande’s other women characters is bold and steadfast. What makes Manjari’s sexuality explicit is the betrayal of her body. Her husband’s betrayal and his illicit relationship with her sister, Malu have already made her a frustrated being; on the other hand, her long detachment with a male body arouses her desire. As a result, she sleeps with her tenant, much younger than her. It is absolutely her physical desire; the mind has nothing to do with it. “only the body, his body, only my body, and my starved body. No thoughts, no feelings, only sensations”(257)

Manjari, a young widow’s life is full of adversity and embarrassment. She becomes ill-treated by various people. One of her friend’s husbands wants her to keep her as his mistress and her employer who is almost of her father’s age, gets desire to have sexual relationship with her. These incidents spoil her nature and create her as a bad character. To protect herself from such sexual exploitation, she changes her appearance and cut her hair short to be looked like man. But she cannot hide her womanhood.
As a lonely woman Manjari faces many challenges both physically and mentally. Externally she faces the problems of Sachi and Anand, marriage proposals of Raja and fights with the terror of Mofia groups. Internally, she is eager to attain her individuality and her body’s sexual hunger. Because of this hunger she falls into sexual relationship with Raman, her tenant. He is quite younger than her. She continuously meets him in the nights for the intention to satisfy her sexual desire without loose her individuality and bond in marital relationship. Manjari, However, meets the bad experiences of her life, she struggles to protect her assits her to learns how to survive in the world without losing individuality and walk on the path of progressive.

Even the threading of the Mofia group too makes her strong. She then becomes determined that does not to leave the house or obey these people. She herself emerges as a fearless woman and she prepares to struggle to be in her father’s house on her own conditions. She never thinks as she was ‘born a female’ rather she feels ‘proud to be born as a woman’. Because of that she can say that, ‘One’s womanhood is always a positive gift’. Shashi Deshpande wants the women to be proved of themselves as they born as woman. This novel shows her wish clearly.

Devyani in *In the Country of Deceit* is completely different from other women protagonist of the novels. She very courageously chooses the married man Ashok Chinappa, the new District Superintendent of Police in Rajnur who is also a father of a female child and establishes her sexual relationship with him without having any fear of the society. She does not believe in deep embedded patriarchal ideology. Shashi Deshpande here by the character Devyani says that marriage is not the only means of fulfillment and happiness but it contributes a lot to get that. In later this idea leads her Chatacter Devyani to self realization.

Like Manjari, She decides to have her own way. It gives a new confidence to her and helps her to lead her towards emancipation. Another character Rani the film actress also lives the life of her own desires. In the novel Shashi Deshpande exhibits how a woman can live alone without depend on man’s help and also remains once again that
women are not only dolls in the hands of male hegemony but they can establish their own identity within the space that allotted for women in the patriarchal society.

Through the study of Shashi Deshpande’s novels the following findings are occurred below. Shashi Deshpande comes from the middle class Marathi and Kannadiga background. She does her task most usefully not only to the woman of particular region but all over universe. Shashi Deshpande with her novels takes her readers into a much more middle-class culture and the forms of male domination within the family take on a horrible and more obvious form. According to the novelist caring nature is considered a woman’s basic trait and it is often celebrated as a virtue but it is diminished as an irrational or un rational urge by patriarchy.

Care, empathy and nurturing have come to acknowledge as feminine virtues. Though these virtues are essential for the enhancement of humanity, society places little value and few rewards on these. Jaya’s complete dedicated caring nature doesn’t identify even by her husband. Shashi Deshpande insists by all of her novels that these caring should occur from domestic life itself to each female child. Then only the female child can fell safe and secure and can be get rid of the disease neurosis and face the society with optimistic way and also they can fell each one of them is unique.

Horney’s image of human nature is significantly more positive comparing with Freud’s theory. The reason for her optimistic belief that biological forces do not attack women makes conflict, anxiety, neurosis, or universality in one’s personality. According to Horney, each person is unique. Neurotic behavior occurs for social forces in childhood. In her theory Horney says that parent-child relationships will either satisfy or frustrate the child’s need for safety. If that need is frustrated, the outcome is neurotic behavior. This neurosis can be avoided if children are raised with love, acceptance, and trust by parents or parent equalent. By her novels Shashi Deshpande indirectly says to Indian mothers to get rid of gender discrimination by providing a caring and loving life their female children.
Shashi Deshpande also points out that Indian mothers do not deliberately behave as cruel to their female children but the patriarchal society moulds them to behave harsh to their female children. Eventhough Shashi Deshpande does not compleletly exhibit mother or mother equalent as bitter role model to daughters. In one of her woman character Aru, appears both in A Matter of time and Shadow Play, takes her mother Sumi as her best role model. Even Indu, Saru, Jaya and Urmic are at last realizing their mothers’ suppressed role and get pity for them. Mother-son and father-son relationships have not been described on wide picture in these novels.

Shashi Deshpande also shows the mother-son relationship is the most harmonious and fulfilling family relationship. A mother is emotionally attached to her son and often she is partial to him at the risk of offending her daughter. The father-son relationship is less problematic than mother-daughter relationship. Sons in Deshpande’s novels often tend to be opposed to their fathers, for Instance, Mohan in That Long Silence doesn’t like his father as he comes home late at night and shows lack of concerns on his family, and respond negatively to the authority exercised by them. In same case Father-son relationship becomes bitter because of the father’s extra-marital relationship as it happens in K. N’s relationship with his father in In the Country of Deceit.

In each and every novel Shashi Deshpande shows marriage that how works as an institution and enslaves women to a lifetime of male’s control. For instance, in That Long Silence the narrator and the woman protagonist Jaya goes through a period of strong introspection and she places her marriage and herself under the scrutiny of a merciless examination.

Shashi Deshpande’s heroines are basically married women and they face issues which marriage gives birth to. Marriage is a trouble for all of her protagonists. Marriage turns Deshpande’s women neurotic. They search for their identity which they are not able to seek. Not only the few heroines but the whole gamut of women from the different generations in the world of Shashi Deshpande is easy prey to marital discords, disharmony, tension etc. it is because of the institution of marriage
which generally thought to be the epitome of love, security, bonding is no where
appears as a rosy picture. Marriage is a means of subjugating women. Marriage is a
contract wherein only the women suffer.

Shashi Deshpande’s attitude is always unique that though marriage often
becomes a prison for her protagonoists, she does not reject it but tries to creat more
breathing space for herself as well as for other women within the structures of marriage
and family. As Kamini Dinesh observes, “The wife, in the end, is therefore not a rebel
but a redeemed wife - one who has broken the long silence, one who is no longer afraid
of the dark. She is a wife reconceptualised as woman and an individual”. (204)

The marital life of the protagonists in Shashi Despande’s novels is not happy
and some of them like Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and Indu in *Roots and
Shadow* experience disappointment in sex. They suffer a silent sexual embarrassment
and terror awaits them in the bedrooms. They feel that their marriage is a trap for them
and they feel like enslaved animals and crave for love and care from their male friends.
The persons with whom they create extra-marital relationship help them in their career,
in their search of selfhood and in their entire development and provide foils to their
husbands. In fact, extra-marital relationship is not a sanctioned relationship and is not a
part of the social structure.

That is the reason Shashi Deshpande exhibits extra marital relationship is not a
solution to their problems, but she shows the relationship which is not an expression
of purely a physical desire, but of something more than that, a feeling of
understanding, acceptance and belonging, of a shared experience. Saru’s relationship
with Boozie’ in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* does not lead to sexual fulfilment but it
improves Saru’s career. Naren in *Roots and Shadows* provides her not only with a
sexual passage but also with an opportunity to recover her self-worth as lively and
emotionally alive person. He lifts up the expectations of a benevolent and supporting
friend but he appears a person who is just careless and casual, unwilling to take any
responsibility.
Kamath in *That Long Silence* makes Jaya realise her true potentiality which is a pleasant discovery to her. Bhaskar Jain in *The Binding Vine* consoles Urmic in her grief and gives to her development as Kamat does to Jaya. Madhu’s relationship with Chandru and Savitribai’s relationship with Ghulam Saab in *Small Remedies* and Manjari’s relationship with her tenant, Raman, in *Moving On* and Devi’s relationship with Ashok in *In the Country of Deceit* are for biological need, for satisfying the cravings of their bodies.

These extramarital relationships of Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists do not imply the rejection of marriage but the rejection of the bondages of marriage. The effect of these extra-marital relationships depends upon the status of the individuals involved and the social situations they are in. Now-a-day, a large number of families are affected by extra-marital affairs. It happens because of increasing social and economic integration, and persons living out of home or away from spouse because of profession. Extra-marital relationships put marital relationship in a state of disaster. Extra-marital affairs of individual adults are less harmful than those of parents whose relationships have a bearing on their children and rendering them to confused state of mind and disturb their emotional strength. Shashi Deshpande never fails to show these kinds of children in the novel *Small Remedies* through the character Munni and in case of Roshni in *In the Country of Deceit* also has the same.

Extra-marital relationships involve the transfer and diversion of emotional energy, which is directed to the marital harmony, the well being of the family and children and promoting careers and social bonding, towards falsifying and fostering forbidden relationships. Such relationships bring self-satisfaction for a short time but that short and temporary pleasure may finally lead to isolation and craving for someone who may become out of reach or unresponsive.

Shashi Deshpande’s delineation of extra-marital relationships in her novels is quite relevant in post modern Indian context as these are no longer prohibited or secrets; they have come out in the open and become a subject of public. People have strong reservation against extra-marital relationship even today. Marriage is still a permanent relationship between male and female as husband and wife which gains
religious, social and legal recognition. If marriage is a universal system to regulate sex life towards the fulfilment of biological needs, extra-marital relationship is a forbidden relationship involving physical, mental and emotional disloyalty. That is why Shashi Deshpande’s heroines who want to emerge themselves from suppression to progression within the space allotted to the patriarcal society easily come out from the extra marital relationship realizing it’s falsifying and find hormony in the bond of marriage.

As the primary focus of attention in Shashi Deshpande's stories is woman her travails, tribulations, deprivations, tensions, irritations, pains and anguishes, her stories suggest that negotiation is what characterizes the life of the common person in the case of the middle-class modern women in India. Shashi Deshpande herself is unable to defy social principle or traditional ethics. She finds herself entangled by desires and depresses, fears and confidents and love and hate. A central concern of Shashi Deshpande's novels is the reducing effect of women psychologically, biologically and physically entrapped in culturally determined ideas of marriage and wifeshood.

Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonists Saru, Indu, Jaya, Urmi, Sumi, Manju, Manjari, Madhu and Devyani all try desperately to mould themselves to fit that image before learning to question the image itself. Through these protagonists the author exposes the stereotypes image of women in the patriarchal society. This is considered a major instrument offered by the reminiscential narrative mode and helps to off-set some of the disadvantages of the first person narrative method. “To achieve something ... you have got to be hard and ruthless ... There is no other way of being a saint. Or a painter. A writer” (TLS 01) this unexpected first paragraph of That Long Silence is the tone of the narrator Jaya, but it also gives the reader a hint to the author's view point of approaching to write. Shashi Deshpande's novels are the most confident declaration of the strength and a purposeful rejection of over-romanticizing.

Shashi Deshpande is characteristically straightforward. The predicament of women awakening to their bodily needs yet conditioned to regard these as immoral is brought out considerately through Jaya. Shashi Deshpande handles the issue briefly,
but with her characteristic authenticity. Shashi Deshpande's protagonist grows towards an honest acknowledgement of responsibility for her own depressed state.

Some critic comments that the presence of many characters in the novels makes difficulty for reading the novels but it can be stated that since her novels are realistic and based on real life situations, the presence of several characters was necessary. Over the years her style has matured as she became more adapt in her writing skills. The extreme characters presence was felt necessary by Shashi Deshpande in her novels because that in her opinion makes the novels realistic. Deshpande's realistic portrait of the protagonist with their facing of middle-class respectability is praiseworthy.

Woman suppression is not pointed so realistically and naturally other than Shashi Deshpande. Her novels are move around quite with the victimization of women in the patriarchal social set-up. Woman suppression means the various ways of woman’s subservient role of man. It is also a complete perception as it engages all the ways and methods which man-made society adopts and training in order to keep women surviving in their fixed room. The motive of Shashi Deshpande’s exposing woman – centered novels is to understand woman’s current position and the intrigues of patriarchal set up to suppress them and wish to awake them from their society’s imposed predicaments. Shashi Deshpande ultimately desires to lead the women from their dominated cells into liberated lands to enjoy the real freedom of supreme. This is the true liberation that Shashi Deshpande passionately desires.

Through self-realization and introspection Shashi Deshpande shows her women how they walk towards from suppression to progression. The self-actualization of “My life is My own” Deshpande shows her women’s inner strength. Introspection ties up the human being with better understanding. It can be possible to attain by the right understanding of the various factors that one can struggle to change one’s downgrade position. Shashi Deshpande’s all the female protagonists show a similarity for introspection. Saru, Indu, Jaya, Sumi, Manju, Manjari, Madhu, Urmia, Kshama, Devyani and Aru all try to grapple with their past. Reconsidering past, in their present
they understand the real self of their own. Their introspection helps them to find answer for their complicated problems and the responsible person for their miseries. They also no hesitate to solve the problem as soon as they find the answer and the responsible persons who are nothing but themselves. They prepare to themselves to march towards their progression.

Shashi Deshpande allows her heroine to take inner journey of seeking their identity. All protagonists of Shashi Deshpande take their journeys and face their situation. They try to come to know the reality. In the end they are become victorious and activist though the novelist does not end the novel with a conclusion but leaves it open-ended and the waves of hope. It is proved that Shashi Deshpande women protagonists are not puppets in the hands of men to dance according to them but they are real individuals and determined to lead their life with bold enough.

Shashi Deshpande’s novels provide true service in revealing the appearance of society. Her novels exhibit the potentiality of the educated people and inform to her readers about the real position of women. Shashi Deshpande’s novels not only empower women but also give a thought that only by forming unity and being aware of one’s real 'self', women can reinforce themselves to come out triumphant in changing society. Horney did not deny that many women believe themselves to be inferior to men. What she questioned was Freud’s claim of a biological basis for these feelings. Although women may view themselves as inadequate compared to men, they do so for societal reasons, not because they were born female. If women feel unworthy, it is because they have been treated that way in male-dominated cultures. After generations of social, economic, and cultural discrimination, it is understandable that many women see themselves in this light.

In the traditional scheme, promoted and endorsed by most men, the woman’s role is to love, admire, and serve her man. Her identity was a reflection of her husband’s. Keran Horney suggested that women should seek their own identity, as she did, by developing their abilities and pursuing careers. These traditional and modern roles create conflicts that many women to this day have difficulty resolving.
Shashi Deshpande’s novels can be further studied in the beam of various feminist writers of both the Indian origin and the world. She places the limits of herself with the tradition based modern middle class matured women and does not take problems of the urban higher class women or rural women. She also does not focus on the diasporic problems faced by Indian women living in the foreign countries. Hence a further study in the light of this aspect can be made.

Shashi Deshpande is a realistic writer who has responsibility towards women’s cause. She hates the discrimination between man and woman in the society. She wants the society should not be show any divisions between man and woman. As both are human beings and equal to each other Shashi Deshpande tries to bring the concept to each of her novel. Shashi Deshpande wants women’s empowerment along with their equal movement with men at each step of life. Life is wonderful and has to be lived once. Women have full rights to live their own life with pleasant without subjugated life or suppressed by men. Shashi Deshpande ‘s novels are yielding the concept of women who should be given equal rights and rendered hands to come up to walk in the path of ‘progression’.

It is appropriate to record here that this thesis has examined the roots of Shashi Deshpande’s writings in the experience of the suppressed women and discovered highlighting evidence of her commitments to a women’s world. So many researchers have been explored on Shashi deshpande’s works and so many findings have been brought out until this research. This research covers up the tradition based modern Indian woman changes into really a modern woman on their thoughts and walk out as a progressive woman. Researchers those who like to persue their research on Shahsi Deshpande may probe into a study of the themes like alienation, detachment and relationship crisis in Shahsi Deshpande’s novels.