Psychological Tribulations of Deshpande’s Women Protagonists

Shashi Deshpande is a truly powerful Indian women writer in English. She lives in a prominent position to delineate the modern Indian women’s real ordeals. She obviously portrays the predicaments of women in her novels. She also depicts how the patriarchal Indian society has suppressed woman’s individuality and crushed her identity in her novels.

The present chapter discusses how Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists are suppressed psychologically as an unwanted child, frustration, fed up, isolation in domestic life, disappointment, inner turmoil of a working housewife, feeling of homelessness, fear to face oneself, feeling of agony in marital life and irritability, anxiety and resentment in social life respectively. The psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud, Jacus Lacan, Simon de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Kate Millet, Juliet Mitchell and Julia Kristeva are applied to understand how the patriarchal society approach its women and suppress them with psychologically, physiologically and biologically and Keren Horney’s theory of ‘Neurosis’ is applied throughout the thesis in order to describe Shashi Deshpande’s woman protagonists’ inner psyche.

As Shashi Deshpande is a post modern writer, the contemporary term of post modernism is also lightly touched to provide a way for new types of thinking. It is used to apply for developments in critical theory, art, literature, philosophy and culture to know the common subjects of identity, cultural differences and conflict in postmodern Indian English fiction. In this globalization era, writers from postmodernism accept as true that any culture or society is not considered as pure. The postmodern writers take their characters and situation both from inside and outside of the country. In their works both the love and sex occupy a predominant place. In Postmodern Indian English Literature, the author Bijay Kumar Das rightly says, “In the Post -1980 era love, sex, and marriage or the failure of it, are some of the leading themes in Indian English novel” (56), he further says that, “The description of love and sex is very bold and rather unconventional” (56).
Indian women writers in English such as Anita Desai, Kamala Das, Kamala markandaya, Barathy Mukherjee including Shashi Deshpande produce feminist novels along with the usual things such as love, sex and contemporary reality. They, further, define the rights of women to live their life in their own way. The characteristics of postmodern life are sometimes difficult to grasp. So most postmodern scholars adopt the theory of psychoanalysis to delineate their characters’ inner psyche.

Psychoanalysis is an applicable tool of literary criticism. It is considered as one of the applications of postmodernism. It also gains wide acceptability among the critical and intellectual circles. The distinguished approach of the psychoanalytic literary criticism is the aspects of the works which have been thought as unimportant by the conventional critics. The practice of this theory make enabled to present the complicated details into serious discourse and to come out with new interpretations of literary works.

Indian writing in English, both in fiction and criticism, provides immense benefit by incorporating psychoanalytic formulations into the creative and critical attempt respectively. In this respect, psychoanalytic criticism is regarded as scientific to the central part. Both psychoanalysis and literature have always been examined as two very strongly related intellectual authorities.

Shashi Deshpande clearly describes the deprived status of women in her plots and sub-plots. She presents in her novels the existing dilemmas and trauma of women who are in the male dominated contemporary Indian society. She depicts the modern educated women’s struggles to overcome the contracting dilemmas which are set and fixed in the names of social norms already drawn by the patriarchal society. Shashi Deshpande focuses primarily on the psychological exploration of the inner mind of women characters. The writer being a woman moves deep into the inner mind of women and brings to light their issues, which are the outcome of Indian women’s psychological and emotional imbalances.
As in the beginning of the chapter has mentioned that it is regarded as important to go through the works of Sigmund Freud and Lacan in order to understand how the patriarchal society has suppressed woman both biologically and psychologically especially from their childhood onwards, The following paragraphs describe it. Further, it is important to know when, how and why the psychoanalytic feminist theory emerged.

The psychological theory of Sigmund Freud and his certain terms like ‘penis-envy’, ‘the Oedipus complex’ (which is regarded to familial relations as well as sexuality & sexual difference.) and the association of masculinity with ‘activity’ (biologically superior sex) and femininity with ‘passivity’, (biologically inferior sex) and Lacan’s ‘Phallogocentric’ are highly problematic for feminist theorists. The psychoanalytic feminists’ ideologists are fiercely attacked these two psychatries theories and by proving clinically they highlight the real psyche of women in their theories.

Sigmund Freud’s work on psychoanalysis has presented feminists challenges, reformation theories, and patriarchal aim. Especially, the Oedipus complex locates the very psychical reproduction of patriarchy and clarifies the structure of sexual roles in western society. In fact Freud has no intention of feminist ideas in his writings but feminists have managed to find his work helpful.

In the theory of Oedipus complex Freud says that, there are few psychical differences between boys and girls. The period starts from the time the child is born to around the age of five. Freud believes that certain steps or undertakings of this period lead up them to the Oedipus complex. Freud’s studies on childhood sexuality show that children, in fact, have sexuality. Freud divides this sexuality period of child’s development into three ‘erotogenic’ zones and phases.

‘Oral’ is the first phase. Child’s breast feeding or bottle feeding starts in this stage. It constructs a very strong attachment between mother and child, or others to feed and nurture the child. This is why the child loves mother or the mother equivalent and
so they become the first love object for the children. Moreover they do not differ much
according to Freud.

‘Anal’ is the second pre-genital phase in the development of the child. It occurs
during a time when the child assumes potty training. During this phase, Freud discovers
that the opposition between two existing is already developed. But they cannot be
described as ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine,’ but only as ‘active’ and ‘passive’

‘Phallic’ is the final phase before the Oedipus complex. During this phase,
children behave quite alike in the realm of their sexuality. The boy’s phallic sexuality is
centered on his penis. However, for the girl, it is her ‘clitoris’ that is considered her
active/phallic/masculine organ during the phallic phase. Although children understand
that there are differences between men and women, boys and girls, they do not yet
characteristic these differences to genitalia.

According to Freud around the age of five, both boys and girls will enter in their
Oedipus complex. They also begin to diverge from a seeming sameness into something
quite different. He says in his psychoanalytic term of *Oedipus complex volume 7*, that,
“When the little girl discovers her own deficiency, from seeing a male genital, it is only
with hesitation and reluctance that she accepts the unwelcome knowledge … When she
comes to understand the general nature of this characteristic, it follows that femaleness -
and with it, of course, her mother - suffers a great depreciation in her eyes”. (380)

This is the reason for Freud says that the girl hates her mother for not giving her
a penis. In turn, the little girl has aggressive feelings towards her mother and all women
in general as they come to the view ‘castrated’. In order to resolve her Oedipus
complex, the girl automatically changes her love object from her mother to her father as
he has the Phallus. Even the boy who realizes that the mother doesn’t have the penis,
he does not have to change the sex of his love object. It is because of the pact with his
father. But Freud himself gets surprise that why the girls gives up mother and love
father as love object. He writes in the term of *Oedipus complex volume 7*, that there is
no, “Surprise that boys retain that object in the Oedipus complex. But how does it happen that girls abandon it and instead take their father as love object?” (334).

Shashi Deshpande demonstrates the antagonism between mothers and daughters in her novels. Unlike Freud’s theory, Shashi Deshpande very strongly points out, through this antagonist relationship, that daughters are not, in fact, hatred their mothers rather they hatred the tradition and culture which suffocated them and comes by the way of their mother. Freud himself frankly accepts that he has somewhat lack of knowledge and skill surrounding femininity in the end of his theory about woman. He also writes in volume 23, after explaining the Oedipus complex and the transformations that occur,

At this point we must give separate accounts of the development of boys and girls (of males and females), for it is now that difference between the sexes finds psychological expression for the first time we are faced here by the great enigma of the biological fact of the duality of the sexes: it is an ultimate fact for our knowledge; it defies every attempt to trace it back to something else. Psycho – analysis has contributed nothing to clearing up this problem, which clearly falls wholly within the province of biology. (188)

It is through the resolution of the Oedipus complex that the psychical differences become pronounced between males and females. At the same time Freud denies the existence of the Electra complex the female version of the Oedipus complex. He refers to femininity as the Dark Continent. He believes that women are biologically physically and morally inferior to men.

Jacques Lacan (1901 - 1981), a French psychoanalyst, researches Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. Lacan’s perception of Imaginary (this is called a pre- oedipal stage) says that the symbolic order is to be taught by the father because in this Imaginary stage the child has not yet differentiated herself or himself from the mother so the child has not learned language. Language and law which is personified by the name of the father are not lessened to social practices and processes. Lacan calls the
‘Law of the father’ as ‘Phallogocentric’ universe (Phallus + logus) in which men are in control of the world. They are in fact the condition of their possibility. Shashi Deshpande’s traditional based Indian women such as mothers of heroines or the mother figures are appeared to follow in the terms of Lacan’s Phallogocentric.

Lacan focuses highly on Freud's work on deep structures and child sexuality. He declares in *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: On Feminine Sexuality: The Limits of Love and Knowledge* that “there's no such thing as Woman, Woman with a capital W indicating the universal” (72). He asserts that ‘The Woman’ does not exist. He then analyzes how the human subject becomes an 'other' through ‘unconscious repression’ and stemming from the ‘Mirror phase’. According to Lacan the conscious ego and unconscious desire are completely divided. Lacan declares that the sexual difference is not biologically innate but established through language and law. Shashi Deshpande satirizes in the novel *That Long Silence* that how women is shaped to be a dumb figure by the character of Mohan’s mother who lives and dies in silence.

The concepts and terms of Freud and Lacan urge psychoanalytic feminists to seek the reality and fact of woman. They strongly believe that women’s suppressions are caused from psychic structure and it is reinforced by the continual repetition of relational dynamic formed in the infancy and childhood. They want to alter this situation from early childhood and familial relationship itself. They consider the political and social factors affect the development of male and female subjects. They see issues of sexual difference and women’s “otherness” in relation to men.

The early psychoanalytic feminists such as Alfred Adler, Karen Horney and Clara Thomson have helped to dismantle dominance of the Oedipus complex by introducing a struggle for new ideas related to thinking of difference and becoming as ways of thinking and living. Alfred Adler and Horney believe that gender identity, behavior, and sexual orientation are a result of experiences and not biology. Shashi Deshpande very strongly mentions this in of her novels. Heroines of Shashi Deshpande never wish to be born as men but they get anger that why the patriarchal society opposes them to recognize as they are individuals. Even though these feminist
psychologists believe that the lack of a penis was influential on a young woman's life, it is simply because society empowers men and not because women feel themselves to be defective.

Karen Horney, the most important contributor of psychodynamic thought, disagrees with Freud’s view of women. She is perhaps the theorist who changes the way psychology looks at gender differences. She counters Freud’s concept of ‘penis envy’ with what she calls ‘womb envy’ (man’s envy of woman’s ability to bear children). She argues that men compensate for this inability by striving for achievement and success in other realms. She quotes in *Cherry & Cherry* that “I know just as many men with womb envy as women with penis envy”. (75)

Like Horney, Simon de Beauvoir argues in *The Second Sex* that women’s envy on men is not because of anatomical superiority but because of the social power and privilege they enjoy. She criticizes Freud’s idea that there is but one, masculine, libido and no feminine libido with its own original nature.

The extreme Feminist writings on psychoanalysis were explored during the period between 1970s and 1980s Feminist authors such as Juliet Mitchell, Luce Irigaray and Julia kristeva point out the misunderstanding terms of Freud in their works. Kate Millet attacks Freud in her influential second wave text *Sexual Politics*, and describes psychoanalysis as irredeemable patriarchal. This situation was confidently revalued by the psychoanalytic feminist Juliet Mitchell.

Juliet Mitchell in *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* emphasizes that the importance of reading of Freud is not as a ‘prescription’ but rather as a ‘description’. She describes in her work that how patriarchal culture is produced and understands of Freud. And also says how feminists should use his work is as a ‘description’ of patriarchy. Mitchell does not believe that Freud is contributing to the problem of patriarchy in his writings on the ‘Oedipus complex’. She even doesn’t believe Freud to be a feminist; she is simply more sympathetic to Freud since she does not think he is ‘prescribing’ his discoveries onto society. Mitchell finds Freud useful because he does explain the reproduction of
patriarchy as well as gendered roles through his writings on the Oedipus complex. Mitchell writes that psychoanalysis does not describe what a woman is far less what she should be; it can only try to comprehend how psychological femininity comes about.

Although Kristeva is not considered as feminist like Freud, the various discussions and debates of women that has discussed in her works make one to think her as a feminist writer. Shashi Deshpande’s mother - daughter relationship is correctly identified by Kristeva’s theory ‘Abjection’. (According to Julia Kristeva in the Powers of Horror, the ‘abject’ refers to the human reaction (horror, vomit) to a threatened breakdown in meaning caused by the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between self and other.) As Kelly Oliver says, the following three elements of Kristeva's thought have been mainly important for feminist theory. They are the first Kristeva’s attempt to bring the body back into discourses in the human sciences; Secondly her focus on the significance of the maternal body and pre oedipal in the constitution of subjectivity; and finally her perception of abjection as an explanation for oppression and discrimination.

Kristeva’s term “Semiotic” (mother - centered) in her work *Desire in Language* opposes Freud and Lacan’s term ‘Symbolic’. In the term ‘Symbolic’ Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan’s have a strong opinion that woman can’t provide a perfect work of art as they have lack the power of the ‘Phallus’. This opinion strengthens to produce many female psychoanalytic ideologists. Freud believes that the absence of ‘phallus’ leads women to anxiety. It is seen in the form of ‘lack’ in their literature. Lacan also believes in his work *Écrits: A Selection, Trans.Alan Sheridan* that, “The ‘Phallus’ signifies the symbolic language. During the stage of acquisition of language, the girl child is unable to identify herself fully with the father and so is at the disadvantage in the process of acquiring language in comparison to the male child” (11).

In this sense women’s ‘writings’ are degraded and devalued by men writers. Julia Kristeva rearranges the classic Freudian conception of the self and the distinction between consciousness and the unconscious into a clearly gendered discursive frame work. For kristeva, the self is a subject of diction a speaker who can use the pronoun ‘I’.
The symbolic aspect of language characterized by referential signs and linear logic corresponds to consciousness and control. For instance, the clear, dry prose of scientific research reports epitomizes symbolic discourse. The semiotic dimension of language characterized by figurative language, cadences and intonations, corresponds to the unruly, passion fueled unconscious, since the rational orderliness of the symbolic is culturally coded masculine while the affect-laden allure of the semiotic is culturally coded feminine, it follows that no discourse is purely masculine or purely feminine.

The masculine symbolic and the feminine semiotic are equally essential to the speaking subject, whatever this individual’s socially assigned gender may be like the unconscious in ‘classic psychoanalytic theory’, the semiotic decanters the self. One may try to express one’s thoughts in definite, straight ward language, yet because of the semiotic aspects of one’s utterances, what one says carries no single meaning and is amenable to being interpreted in more than one way.

The semiotic gives expression to repressed, unconscious material. Thus she discerns a vital ethical potential is clearly linked to the feminine, Kristeva’s account of the self displaces ‘Masculine’ adherence to principle as the prime mode of ethical agency and recognizes the urgent need for a ‘feminine’ ethical approach. Shashi Deshpande says in *The Dilemma of a Woman Writer*, “Women writers are expected to write for women's magazines and be read by women readers only. Males generally do not want to read women writers”. (9-10)

Through the characters Jaya in *That Long Silence* and Indu in *Roots and Shadow*, Shashi Deshpande points out the difficulties faced by the women writers. In the novel *The Binding Vine* she writes how Mira troubles hard to attain recognition as she is a poet. According to her, generally the patriarchal society asks the women writers, “Why do you need to write poetry? It is enough for a young woman like you to give birth to children. That’s your poetry. Leave the other poetry to us men” (BV 127) and it is used to say for men writers that “He’s that rare thing, a born poet,” (BV 127). But the Psychoanalytic feminist writers do not accept the challenge of conventional
psychoanalysts thinking that women’s writing is as inferior at all. They point out that the writing is an activity which takes place in the mind. They also compare the work of art with the process of conception in the uterus. They rightly say that mother-daughter relationship is a brilliant point. Women writers acquire immense energy and power from it so there is no ‘lack’ in experience. Kristea’s psychological theory insists this in the term of semeiotic that,

It is a level of code from the acoustic rhythms of mother - child interactions from within the body and surrounding the cradle. We are often deaf to this music and to Kristea’s intuition of this quality of translated imagery in our language. She believes that these sound patterns become part of the communicativeness of humans, and inform and transform more integrated and sophisticated sounds and meanings.

(91)

Hence Kristeva strongly opposes the term ‘Phallus’ and says that women is not inferior at any cost to man. Each has his/her own individuality. In this way Shashi Deshpande too produces her work and gives importance of her heroines’ individuality. For this reason, many women writers including Shashi Deshpande provide their women characters as psychoanalytic way. She, in her novels, follows a male tradition but she celebrates womanhood. She writes in the language of male but sings the songs of women.

Shashi Deshpande is very much influenced to provide her female characters with the psycho analytical personalities of Virginia wolf. She presents the entire protagonist in psycho analytical way. Her female characters are not only sensitive, self conscious but also brilliant and creative. They struggle against the traditional parental family. They also want to escape from the narrow minded society. Shashi Deshpande herself says clearly about her characters in an interview with Vimal Rama Rao says that, “My characters are all human being, one sees in the world around” (23).
She is a talented writer to reveal the subconscious and unconscious psyche of her women protagonists. She is not the favour of women. She exhibits what the real position of women in the world. She also depicts, as Kristeva says that, how women are “exiles” in their own country, alienated by a masculine language and culture which only recognizes the feminine in its deviation from a masculine norm. She believes in humanity. She never considers the superiority or inferiority of man and woman. She states this in an interview with Geetha Gangadharan in The Fiction of Shashi Deshpande that, “We need to have a world, which we should recognize, as a place for all of us human beings. There is no superior an inferior; we are two halves of one species. I fully agree with Simone de Beauvoir that the fact that we are human is much more important than our being men and women” (11).

She presents her protagonists to raise their voice against the traditional role models of daughter, mother, and wife. As they are sensitive and intelligent, they refuse to be the object of cultural and social oppressions of age old patriarchal social set up. Shashi Deshpande describes the career oriented middle class women’s dilemmas and their suffocated feelings in a realistic ways. Shashi Deshpande, by her women characters, creates a revolt against social taboos and questions the concept of love, marriage and sex. She also makes them to feel an urge to redefine human relationship and behaviour.

She, then, depicts how the existing system and tradition lead their women characters to get frustration, helplessness and the sense of meaninglessness. Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists are rebellions against the roles assigned by tradition. These middle class family women feel marriage is nothing but constricting bonds. It traps and suffocates their womanhood. They neither like to bond themselves in the name of marriage nor do they want to renounce their family. They try to come in terms of marriage and want to attain their goal within the accepted codes of society. They seek freedom to think and decide independent and liberation from her womanhood within the institution of marriage. In Writing from the Margin Shashi Deshpande wrote,
The women in my novels, like the women in India today, or indeed like women or humans anywhere, have so many forces working on them - and all at the same time. There’s history and culture, there’s religion and customs, there are individual and family, faiths and beliefs, family traditions and histories. And last but not the least, there are also the people around us and their expectations and our relationships with them.

(160)

As Kristeva classifies in her essay *Women’s Time* about the three distinct times or generations and how each of them survive with their own approach to and vision of justice, Shashi Deshpande presents three types of suffering women in her novels. Kristeva says that the first generation is Universalist in principle. It desires to give women a place within history and the social contract. The mission of this generation is women’s equality and identity with the governing values of wisdom. It also denies bodily difference.

The second generation is unthinking and eliminates the idea of incorporation to values taken to be masculine. It refuses to contribute of a history. It believes to be masculine. The third generation follows neither the path of fixing identity nor the path of deactivates difference in the medium of universality.

The third generation recognizes that it is as active beings and enters into the social bond and community with others. Kristeva’s second generation is Shashi Deshpande’s first type of woman characters. They are generally the Mother figures or heroines’ mothers. They are always fitting in the tradition based Indian society. They lead their life with the traditional role model ‘Sita’ and ‘Savitri’. According to them their husbands are their lords. They strongly believe that their place is within their husbands and children. They think their husbands are their ‘sheltering tree’.

They define themselves that a wife’s duty is to be modest and never too aggressive or forward and she must be a truthful server of her husband. They further think that it is a sin to disobey their husband’s order. They follow their life as Indian
myths and ethos drawn that a woman should be under the control of her father till her marriage, then husband’s house after her marriage and the sons during her old age. These types of women always are in silence and surrender.

In *That Long Silence* Mohan’s mother is portrayed in this type. She suffers a lot because of his father’s male dominion attitude. Mohan’s father gives her much pain but she tolerates all in silence. As meek and submissive are considered the good characteristics of a truthful Indian house wife, Mohan’s mother blindly follows the characterization which Kristeva mentioned in this in her second generation. Even the mistake lies on her husband she never raise her voice against him. Mohan’s father’s inhumanity is delineated by Mohan that,

I was ill I remember I had fever when he came home that night. I was sleeping on my usual bed … The man looked down at the boy and said, “What are you doing? Do you want to finish off that mat? Does his lordship think we can buy a new one everyday?”… He came closer and kicked at the hand, hard, so that the boy cried out loudly in anger and pain. Mother rushed out … sat down beside the boy and asked him, ‘how is your headache? Is it better?’ ‘Stop pampering him’, the man said.

(TLS 34)

Her subservient wife role is clearly describes in another situation. Even she completes her house hold activities; she waits for her husband’s arrival. She seldom asks the reason for his late coming. She prepares fresh meals for him. She gives dinner to their children first and then cooks rice again for him. Whatever he asked for that day food it is Mohan’s mother’s duty to do that and never opposes her husband’s words. One day she is waiting for him after the second cooking, Mohan’s father comes too late and at the dinner. He asks about fresh chutney without looking his mother. She mumbles something so the next moment he picks up his heavy brass plate and throws it and walks out of the house. She, with patiently, cleans the place and prepare food again. She asks Mohan to get some chillies from the next door woman to prepare chutney. She then starts to prepare fresh food for him.
Mohan when he went back his mother was lighting the fire, blowing at it through the brass blower to set the flames going. Her eyes were red, but it could have been the smoke for the wood was always bad, it never burnt clean, and though they had got used to its pungent, acrid smell in the house, her eyes were always red with the smoke. (TLS 36)

The next predominant suffering of traditional woman is sex. Indian wives are taught to obey to their husbands will. Sex is regarded here as holy. Sexual assault by a husband on his wife is not considered to be a crime. A wife is expected to submit. In That Long Silence Mohan’s mother suffers by pregnancy. Vimla, Mohan’s sister tells Jaya that, “Almost all my childhood I remember her as being pregnant. She didn’t want that last child, she’d lost four or five babies by then, and she is desperate” (TLS 37).

In Roots and Shadow the woman character Akka also suffers by the marital rape as Mohan’s mother suffers by pregnancy. As Manu Samhita mentioned that a man of thirty may marry a girl of twelve and a man of twenty four may marry a girl of eight, Akka got married at the age of twelve with a man of thirty years old. Her husband is a man of thirty and a tall, bulky man with large, coarse features. Akka’s father was a rigid man and she lost her mother while she was a child. She becomes aloof and not to reveal her suffering to anyone but she tried to escape from her husband’s house twice. Narmada-atya says to Indu that, “I heard that twice she tried to run away … a girl of 13. Her mother-in-law, I heard, whipped her for that and locked her up for three days. Starved her as when it meant so much more to me than it would have done at any time before” (RS 76). Shashi Deshpande here highlights the fact that how irrational practices are still observed in our society against woman.

In A Matter of time, Shashi Deshpande illustrates the most striking example of kalyani’s silence. Kalyani is the mother of the woman protagonist Sumi. Kalyani spends nearly forty years in total silence with her husband, Shripati. In this novel Shashi Deshpande very effectively mentions the mental agony of the traditional mothers’ failure to beget male babies. It is a fact that a husband is traditionally allowed to leave his wife if she cannot give birth to a male heir.
Manorama, Kalyani’s mother has no son. Thinking her husband Vithalrao might marry again to have a son; she arranges marriage to Kalyani to her own brother Shripati. Manorama gets happy when Kalyani begets a male baby. But the child turns out to be mentally retarded. Kalyani loses this child at the railway station while going to her parental home. This incident comes to an end to Kalyani’s marital life. Shripati, thereafter, stops his talking to Kalyani. They live like strangers under the same roof.

In *The Biding Vine* Shashi Deshpande brings out the real middle class mother figure Shakutai. Her husband deserts her for some other woman. She lives alone with her three children. In that circumstance her elder daughter Kalpana is brutally attacked and raped. She is admitted in a hospital in a serious condition. Shakutai, at first, thinks that her daughter has met with an accident. But when she comes to know the real reason that Kalpana was raped, she starts worry about her marriage rather to struggle for getting justice to Kalpana. She cries in agony and fear and says that, “No, no, no. Tell him, Tai, it's not true, don't tell anyone. I'll never be able to hold up my head again, who'll marry the girl, we're decent people, doctor,” She turns to him don't tell the police” (TBV 58). In her fearsome state of mind she gives an insight into the society's attitude towards victims of rape. She says further, “If a girl’s honour is lost, what's left? The girl doesn't have to do anything wrong, people will always point a finger at her” (TBV 59).

Shashi Deshpande has very wisely laid bare the fear, anger, helplessness and anguish of Indian mothers through the character of Shakuntala. In spite of being the victims of patriarchy, some of these women have the power to control over other women in the family because of their status as mothers or mothers-in-law. Saru’s mother in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Indu’s Akka in *Roots and Shadows* and Jaya’s mother in *That Long Silence*, belong to this type.

Kristeva’s third generation is Shashi Deshpande’s the second and the third type of suffering women. As Kristeva believes that there is no subjectivity and no sociality without the violence of the symbolic convention, the second and third type of women characters act as rebellious in their early part of their life but at last the second type
remains unchanged and disobey the traditional rules that drawn by the male dominated society. These are not only bold but also more independent and do not obey the rules to the Sita’s version of womanhood. They consciously incline towards what could be designated as radical feminist ideology. They are mostly the heroine’s friends. Saru’s friend Nalu (*The Dark Holds No Terrors*) is the best example to hold a feminist ideology to life for the sake of which she chooses to lead an independent life as spinster.

The third types of women are generally the heroines of Shashi Deshpande. These women protagonists are all educated, practical, and progressive. They are moving on fearless. They rebel against the rules of both domestic and social sanctions which are mentioned by the patriarchal society. But, unlike the second type who remains unchanged, these women seek identity and harmony within the family as Kaur in *Shsahi Deshpande: A Feministic Interpretation* says that, “They realize that victory doesn’t lie in the subjugation and destruction of the male, rather than bringing him to see the indispensability of each other’s space” (91).

These women are neither based on the tradition nor radical in their ideas and practice. They are shown to be in a state of ‘Neurosis’ (Neurosis is a psychological term which is coined by Keren Herney) in the beginning. Slowly as the novel discloses, they go through a process of introspection, self-analysis and self-realization. At the end, they come out as more confident, progressive, more in control of themselves and attain their self-Identity. These heroines are suffering a lot than the former mentioned two types because they are aware of the escape routes ‘the traditional’ and ‘the radical’ but they hesitate to choose these options. This is because, in their childhood, these women protagonists are forced to perform traditional rules but their individuality raise question and analysis the reason for what purpose they should use these traditional rules. This rival mind set is the cause to their confused mind to choose these options.

Psychoanalytic feminists too believe that women’s psyche is deeply affected by their childhood experience and it shapes their future lives. As Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonists are affected by the bitter sexual discrimination of the patriarchal society in their childhood, they robotically turn the disease of neurosis and become
neurotic. Horney in *The Neurotic Personality Of Our Time* says that ‘Neurotic’ is a person who affects by neurosis. Neurosis is a “Psychic disturbance brought by fears and defenses against these fears and by attempts to find compromise solutions for conflicting tendencies” (28-29).

This describes an individual having trouble with dealing and handling certain psychosocial environmental stressors resulting in problems within their selves. Horney writes that neurotic cannot be diagnosed without looking at their culture background and its feelings and attitudes are determined by the way they live. Horney feels Freudian theory doesn’t give importance to the culture factors which consequently leads to false acquisitions. The neurotic shares their fears with other cultures. Freud suggests that the real self of a neurotics determined by his concept of ego. This concept of ego is without plan or executive powers.

But Horney thinks a neurotic is driven by these emotional forces that are involved in their lives. Horney, further, believes that Freudian's theory about sexuality and continuous compulsives is interfering with an individual, the family, and social factors where there is organization of values, and attitudes. Freud believes they are compulsive drives from nature, involving in every human being. Horney says in *Inner Conflicts* that this cannot be valid if these “neuroses were an outgrowth of disturbed human relationships” (12). She believes and says in *Self-Analysis* that “They are compulsive drives but become neurotic by a human feeling isolated, helpless, afraid, and hostile. They represent ways of coping with their life despite these problems called ‘neurotic trends’” (40).

Neurotic’s compulsive behavior generates a basic ‘intrapsychic conflict’ this may take the form of either ‘idealized self image’ or ‘self hatred’. The idealized self image is expressed as the follows. They are neurotic search for glory, neurotic claims and neurotic pride. Like the same self hatred is expressed as either self contempt or alienation from self.
Karen Horney in *Psychoanalytic Social Theory* builds on the assumption that social and cultural conditions, especially childhood experiences, are largely responsible for shaping one’s personality. If the people do not have their needs for love and affection during their childhood periods, it will develop as ‘basic hostility’ towards their parents and for the consequence they suffer from ‘basic anxiety’.

Horney in *The neurotic personality of our time* defines basic anxiety as an “insidiously increasing, all-pervading feeling of being lonely and helpless in a hostile world” (89). It is the foundation on which later neuroses develop, and it is inseparably tied to feelings of hostility. Regardless of how we express basic anxiety, the feeling is similar for all of us. Horney says that it is a feel of “small, insignificant, helpless, deserted, endangered, in a world that is out to abuse, cheat, attack, humiliate, betray” (92). Shashi Deshpande’s women characters are suffering by the same feel.

According to Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of human needs’, food, clothing and shelter are considered as basic needs. Love and recognition are the second important needs and the third significant need is self-actualization. In the case of women, second and third needs are not fulfilled so it creates pain and agony to women. Women writers try to provide them love recognition and self-actualization by their writings. Shashi Deshpande, a talented new generation woman writer in English, delineates the important female psyche of being an unloved and unwanted child in her earlier novels.

Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists of her earlier novels Saru, Indu, and Jaya are suffered by aloofness, insecurity and mental agony. They are, at the beginning, rebellious and want to be detached themselves from the age old tradition that drawn by the patriarchal society. But in course of time they desperately try to match themselves according to the tradition rules in the name of love and family. Roy rightly points out about these women in his *Patterns of Feminist Consciousness in Indian Women Writers* that, “Indu, Saru and Jaya all desperately try to fit themselves to the prescribed image before they learn to question the image itself” (50). The story of the protagonists Saru and Indu’s are alike. Both are described as in the manner of defiant in their young ages,
and get married a man of their own choice. They realize their mistakes at last and attain their individuality.

The character of Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terror* can be truly understood only in the light of psychological precepts. The story begins with the woman protagonist Saru’s psychological aloofness and her husband’s sadism. She visits her parental home after a gap of fifteen years on hearing the news of her mother’s death through one of her patients. She is welcomed by her father as an unwanted guest. Shashi Deshpande technically uses the polished conversation to show father’s rejection as well as unexpected arrival of his daughter through using first and third person’s interaction that, “Can I come in, Baba?” He moved aside, composing his face into normality. ‘I didn’t expect you’. ‘No, how could you?, ‘You didn’t write’ (DHNT 16).

In fact she comes to her parental home to escape from her husband’s brutal sexual attack at every day night. Escapism and seeking freedom are the common theme of the postmodern novelist. The new generation Indian women writes’ generally use the term ‘Liberation’ and ‘Freedom’ from the age old traditional rules in their woman-centered novels. Shashi Deshpande’s heroines too seek freedom from the undrawn traditional social set up.

It is absolutely true that Indian woman has no room for them. As they are brought up to keep under the control of father at their parental home and husband in their marital home, the society doesn’t allot even a small space for them to live separate. That is the reason many of Shashi Deshpande’s heroines return to their parental home after they get a conflict with their husbands. Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* returns to her father’s house to escape from her husband’s brutal sexual attack. Fortunately Saru’s parental home renders not only a room to stay her but also a place to recall her childhood events.

Her mother’s gender bias, her younger brother Dhruva’s death and her alienation are constantly disturbs her mind. It also makes Saru like a patient of hysteria. Freud In *Studies in Hysteria* (1895) says obviously that hysteria is diagnosed. Without any
physical disease it is caused by an idea or memory that makes one ill. By definition, 
hysteria is ideogenic (caused by an idea). Freud initially hypothesizes that hysterical 
symptoms arise as a result of violent childhood seduction, a real trauma that is then 
retroactively set in motion by a second, comparatively milder, event, after a period of 
latency.

The seduction hypothesis is an attempt to explain the etiology of hysteria (the 
origins of neurosis) by the traumatic force of a premature sexual experience occurring 
in early childhood, an external event that impinges upon the psychical apparatus but 
whose memory is repressed, cut off from consciousness. The repressed memory 
becomes somatized (enacted on the body and in bodily symptoms) when a later event, 
usually occurring in puberty, catalyzes the earlier memory traces. Saru’s childhood 
bitter experience affects not only her but also affects her married life. That is why Years 
on Saru still remember her mother’s hurting words on her that “Why didn’t you die? 
Why are you alive and he is dead” (DHNT34).

The need of parental love is essential to one who lives health by mentally. Jasbir 
Jain, one’s life is shaped by one’s childhood and one’s parents. Jasbir in Gendered 
Realities, Human Spaces quotes, “Childhood experiences and memories go a long way 
towards moulding life attitude and personal relationships. A feeling of rejection, a 
traumatic memory, tension in the household, sexual discrimination, extra-marital 
interest on the part of a parent - all these influence future relationships”. (121)

Saru’s lack of parental love makes her depressed and mentally feels anxious. 
Saru, the first daughter of her parents, is being separated by her parents as they give 
importance to her younger brother Dhruva. Functions related with Dhruva are 
celebrated in a grand manner. His birthday is celebrated as a ritual but at the same time 
Saru’s birthday is not even considered. Moreover her mother’s apathetic words that “He 
is different, He is a boy” (DHNT 45) Often pines her mind. Her mother’s affection on 
her younger brother Dhruva makes her to feel alienated. She starts to hate her mother 
along with her brother Dhruva.
The inherent hate on Dhruva later becomes the reason to leave Dhruva to drown the water rather to help him. As psychoanalytic feminist says this is not the theory of Freud’s ‘Penish - envy’ but it is simply because society’s empowerment of men Dhruva’s death deeply affects her mother. It is because the patriarchal society moulds the psyche of a mother to follow the traditional rules that the male child is the ultimate solution to the entire problem but the female is an unwanted trouble. Saru’a mother thinks in her sub conscious that Saru is an unwanted child to the patriarchal society so she disgusts Saru completely.

The constant wounding words of her mother that, “You killed him. Why didn’t you die? Why are you alive, when he’s dead?” (DHNT 191) pines Saru for days, months, years and all her life. This sense of rejection by her mother fills Saru's mind with feelings of hatred towards her mother. This rejection by her mother creates psychological insecurity to Saru. As Horney says that a child’s security depends entirely on how the parents treat the child and the major way parents weaken or prevent security is by displaying a lack of warmth and affection for the child, Shashi Dshpande here points out that Saru’s feel of insecurity is the cause derived from her parents’ lack of love on her and wants son eagerly.

She anticipates love from her mother throughout her life but she does not get the motherly affection from her parents. She thinks even from the moment of her birth, her mother starts to hate her. In an occasion Saru recalls that, “It rained heavily the day you were born. It was terrible. And somehow, it seemed to me that it was my birth that was terrible for her, not the rains” (DHNT 169).

Mother is generally regarded as a symbol of god who shows sympathy and warmth to her children especially to her female child. But the male dominated society moulds the psyche of a mother as a traditional woman who always treats the male child as a redeemer to the family and an ultimate solution to all problems. That is the reason the mother gives her concern only to her male child but it turns over female either depressed or rebellious as Saru behaves to her mother. Adesh Pal who uses psychological parameters to analyze Saru’s personality observes her depressed mindset
that, “For Saru the very word "mother" stands for old traditions and rituals, for her mother sets up a bad model, which distorts her growth as a woman, as a being ... thus the strange childhood experiences flare up her inflated ego and her thirst for power over others” (29).

Rituals and functions are rejected after Dhruva’s death. The communication between Saru and her mother is also totally lessened. Her father, too, takes no interest in her studies and her improvement. He expresses neither love nor anger towards Saru. Her father’s indifference imitates the indirect expression of patriarchy. That is, as Shashi Deshpande mentions, emotionally injurious. Saru’s extreme pain and alienation are clearly described by Shashi Deshpande in the following lines: “Nobody likes me. Nobody cares for me. Nobody wants me” (DHNT 83).

Her mother’s total rejection of Saru feels her insecure and turns her to be rebellious. The rigidity of do this and do not do that prescribed by the dominant mother makes Saru grow defiant and insists her to do against that or omit that. The conversation between Saru and her mother proves that, “Don't go out in the sum. You'll get even darker. Who cares? We have to care if you don't. We have to get you married. I don't want to get married. Will you live with us all your life? Why not? You can't And Dhruva? He's different. He's a boy” (DHNT 45). She also feels happy whenever she dominates her mother. She gets happy by using hurting words on her mother. She says that, “I hated her. I wanted to hurt her, Make her suffer. But I didn’t know how. I was no more that naïve child who had once said, trying to wound her, I dreamt you were dead’. “Actually Baba who, I had dreamt was dead” . (DHNT 142)

In the Indian culture, the parents’ intense firmness of the son (Male heir) many times creates bias towards the female child. They fail to realize that female child also needs love and care from parents to up bring properly. Partial attitude of gender discrimination towards the female child leads them to inner turmoil and that mould their personality incomplete but only with their strong determination, these female children establish their individuality in their parental house and the patriarchal society. This is an
important characteristic of the study. This study is clearly reflected in Shashi Deshpande’s novels.

The rejection of the desires of the daughter by her mother and father prove essential in the identity formation, which is the key to Kristeva’s ‘abjection’. As Reesi Sistani says in *Psychoanalytical Tensions of Problematic Mother-Daughter Relationship in Jamaica Kincaid’s My Brother* that,

Abjection is a significant element of Kristeva’s theory of identity formation. It is often described within the context of mother-child relationships. Kristeva’s theory contends that a child must abject itself from its mother, eschew her; put her aside, as an important step within identity formation. This act of abjection never fully expels a mother’s heavy influence in her child’s life. But the act of abjection the mother allows the space needed for the child to become its own individual. (72)

Here Saru’s mother’s alienation creates Saru’s strong determination. She wants to shine in the society by opposing the traditional rules. That is the main cause to lead her study MBBS and marry a man Manu, a low caste boy. She then becomes defiant utterly. Shashi Deshpande presents her rebellious manner which bursts out extremely at two times. Firstly, it explodes out in her selection of MBBS studies. Saru’s talking with her mother proves that, “I’m not talking to you. I’m not asking you for anything. I know what your answer will be. No, forever a “no” to anything I want. You don’t want me to have anything; you don’t want me to do anything. You don’t even want me to live” (DHNT 142).

She joins medical college in Bombay even after her mother’s constant persistent. She thinks her this victory is a triumph against the orthodox norms. Secondly, it burst out in her marriage with Manu, a lower caste boy. When her mother asks she replies in haters that, “What cast is he? I don’t know. A Brahmin? Of course not. Then, cruelly … his father keeps a cycle shop. Oh’ so they are low-caste people, are they?” (DHNT 96).
Saru thinks that she is unhappy and destroyed in her marital life because her mother has cursed her once that “let her know more sorrow than she has given me” (DHNT 197). Saru’s anticipation of love and care stimulates her to get love marriage with Manu, a low-caste boy. When Manu utters his love for her, she feels delighted. Marriage opens the sesame of all enjoyment and ecstasy for Saru. After the first moment of hesitation, there is never anything withholding in her. Saru who has lacked love in her parental home finds a redeemer in Manu. “I was insatiable, not for sex but for love. Of my being loved, of my being wanted” (DHNT 40).

Saru leads a happy and peaceful life with Manu. When she was a student Manu has been the breadwinner. Saru enjoys her life happily. Problems begin slowly only after Saru is recognized as a doctor. Her economic independence and social influence makes Manu to feel completely insecure and this casts a shadow on their married life. Saru fails to notice the change initially but later then she realizes that “the esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller, but ... made him inches shorter” (DHNT 42).

Saru’s profession keeps her away from Manu. She reaches home late at night. Saru’s success hurts Manu’s ego. He feels inferior. He is very much shocked when an interviewer asks him, “How does it feel when your wife earns not only the butter but most of the bread as well?” (DHNT 200), it weakens his confidence totally. He turns his wounded male pain as a sexual sadist. He becomes brutal in his behavior. He turns a traitorous rapist at night and asserts his masculinity through sexual assaults upon Saru. She disdains the word 'love' and feels it never exists between man and woman and changes her attitude towards Manu and her marital life. Saru’s problems follow her because of her outsized ego and innate love with Manu.

Saru once again becomes lonely and insecure. She starts to taste the pain as she doesn’t know the escaping way. For the world Saru is a happiest woman as she has a lovable educated husband and two children but in actually she is a victim of the male dominated society. The deception of her life has been destroying and blocking her real ‘self’. Saru, first, suffers from the gender discrimination at her parental home and then
next she becomes the victim of the male dominated society and prey to Manu’s brutal rape.

She escapes both times, the first time to establish her independence from her mother’s suppression and the second time to find her indispensability to her husband. At both times the psyche of Saru is reflected through her feelings of homelessness. It is a confirmation of her sense of isolation. The feeling of homelessness is indicative of inner disintegration. Through the novel, *The Dark Holds no Terrors*, Shashi Deshpande questions the hypothesis that the employment of the wife can serve as the means of her economic independence. But at the same time her profession does not require the ‘latent’ to reduce the gap between man and woman and even not provide a ‘room’. While Saru’s income provides a sophisticated life style to her family, her contribution does not notice by the male dominated society.

Even *If I Die Today* and *Come Up and Be Dead* are the detective novels, Shashi Deshpande touches the women’s predicaments of ‘unwanted child’ and the women role of suppression in the patriarchal society. Like Saru, Mriga in *If I Die Today* suffers from the feeling of an unwanted child to her parents. Mriga’s father Dr. Kulkarni is a modern and westernized man. He is mentally seized by the patriarchal norms that son is a righteous heir. Even he is a well - educated and leads sophisticated life, he wants a male child. As Mirga being female he doesn’t like her. Shashi Deshpande here tries to reveal the real face of Hindu parents’ aspiration of male heir. She says in the voice of Manju, “Behind the pipe - smoking perfectly mannered phlegmatic style that he cultivated was her after all, just a traditional Hindu man longing for a son and heir? And taking it out on poor Mriga because she was only a girl?” (IIDT 36).

As an only daughter Mirga lives lonely though she has parents. She feels insecure and anticipates for love. Her mother too fails to give her support to Mirga. She grows in the circumstance of aloofness, hatred, and hostility. She never tastes the joy of happiness as she thinks herself an unwanted child. Psychologists say that this is the psychology of an unwanted child. A psychologist, Arnold Buss has stated that the core of self esteem is formed by the unconditional love of the parents. But here Mriga has
not received the absolute love of her parents, and so her ‘self’ regard is low. She becomes unsure about her worth and her place in the society.

In *Come Up and Be Dead* (1983), the women protagonist Kshama recalls her mother’s unattachment with her. Like Saru’s mother, Kshama’s mother is also portrayed in a negative light. Kshama, the protagonist, also does not have a mutual relationship with her mother. Her mother gets married at her teen age. At the age of sixteen Pratap was born. It gives a great trouble to her. It makes disgust on her mother. Shashi Deshpande, a realistic writer always breaks the general concept of the patriarchal society that a mother always showers love to her daughter as she is a mother. It is not because of her any personal heartedness on mother character but because of her attempt to exhibit the real world of mother-daughter relationship. The antagonism of the unwanted child is strongly described in the novel through another character Sonali. She is really averse to her mother Mrs.Raman and then another character Devi does not like to think of her mother.

Another reason, for Indian mother’s thinking that female baby is an unwanted child, is the man made society hands over the responsibility to take care of female child to mothers. If the girl commits any mistakes the society never hesitate to point out her mother that she is the reason for her child’s wrong way. For this reason too Indian mothers worry when they beget female baby. Shashi Deshpande very correctly points out this through the women characters of Shakutai in *The Binding Vine* and Sonali’s mother in *Come up and Be Dead*.

The feelings of love and appreciation towards the mother are transformed into feelings of fear, defeat and hate as the child realizes her subordinate position in relation to the controlling mother. The problematic relationship between Sonali and her mother gets worse when she doesn’t allow her daughter to talk with to those girls whom she suspects of having boyfriends. Once she sees her daughter talking to Bunny, whom she dislikes of and commands Sonali to come home at once. Sonali gets annoyance so much so that she explodes, “Amma, why do you shout at me like that? You insult me; you
humiliate me before my friends. It’s not fair. I’m ashamed of you, I’m ashamed” (CUBD 23).

She grows hatred towards her mother as her mother always tries to controll her life. Once she says with aversion, “Mothers! I hope I never become one” (CUBD 36) as Saru says “If you are a woman, I don't want to be one” (DHNT 62). Bunny warns Mrs. Jyoti Raman to go away with her daughter but Sonali refuses to go and fights with her mother. But her mother is murdered before she realizes that her mother is trying to defend her from the foul happenings in the school and outside it.

Manju is the protagonist of the novel *If I Die Today*. She struggles hard to keep her ‘self’ both at home and the society. Deshpande points out Manju’s female self through her assertion of self – realization and self- analyzing. Manju’s unequal stance of life serves as a consequence to a vague and unsure trait. Manju, as a traditional based Indian woman, regards her relationship with her husband is a scared and holy. She feels later that marriage is not only a miserable but also a ruin. She wants to escape from the bondage of marriage. For Indian wife, it is not easy to escape from her husband’s house.

Shashi Deshpande here mentions the middle class house wife’s mental agony by the voice of Manju, “I thought its trap keeping you in a cage until you lose the desire for freedom until you forget what the word ‘freedom’ means” (IIDT 47).

It is because of the brought up of female who are blindly advised to follow the conservative traditional ideology. That is why they afraid to assert themselves and find individuality. It is no doubt that if they raise their voice against the trials and tribulations; they have to pay and loose many and to face the conflict. So many of the women keep silent and surrender which are the integral parts of their life. It is acceptable that both the compromise and adjustment bring peace to family but the much these suppress their individuality.

Indu in *Roots and Shadow* suffers by the same compromise and adjustment with her husband Jayanth. Like Saru, Indu endures Jayant sexual humiliation for love sake. Shashi Deshpande tells the woman protagonist Indu's painful self-analysis in the novel.
She suffers from both the sexual discrimination and the marital incompatible. Indu is an educated, career oriented and a highly sensitive woman. She tries to see and listen to the voice of her conscience. She aspires to become independent and complete in herself. To Indu it is difficult to move towards her emotional growth, peace and fulfillment. Akka, the eldest and the dominant figure of the family, controls Indu’s Independent activities. Indu, from her childhood days onwards, was told to be submissive, meek and dutiful girl. She recalls,

As a child, they had told me I must be obedient and unquestioning. As a girl, they had told me I must be meek and submissive. Why? I had asked. Because you are a female. You must accept everything, ever defeat with grace because you are a girl, they said. It is the only way, they said, for a female to live and survive. And I …. I had watched them and found to be true. There had to be, if not the substance, at least the shadow of submission. (RS 174)

In patriarchal society especially in India female child is advised by the elderly women to inculcate in her the cherished feminine qualities as it is the only way to survive in male dominated families. But Indu, who wants to be an independent woman, resolves not to become their model. She hates the orthodox rules and its compulsion.

Like Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Indu gets pleasure whenever she breaks the traditional rules. She leaves the house for the first time for her study and then next she marries a man whom she loves.

She too suffers herself by the female psyche of an unwanted child. Indu’s mother belonged to a different caste so her father’s family rejected them. It develops, her father, Govind, disgust and hatred towards his own parents. After his wife’s death, he has left his motherless daughter Indu at the removal of his family. Indu is shocked to find her father’s rigidness. She underestimates her father’s attitude that he neglects his duties as a father. She estimates her father as an insensitive person and also thinks that if she were a male baby he doesn’t do that. She hates her father’s patriarchal perception
later and says that, “How else could he have parted with me, a fifteen-days-old
motherless baby, to the family he hated and despised? He had not even come to see me
until I was more than a year. But that, perhaps, was because I was a girl. If I had been a
son”.(RS 179)

Here too Indu’s anticipation of becoming son is not the Freudian theory of
‘penis envy’ but she has realized that women are devalued whereas men are valued as
Juliet Mitchell says in *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*. Indu hates the domineering figure
Akka - a symbol of leadership, passes orders to her family and who is the one who
assures happiness to everybody. Akka’s rules and restrictions give psychological
injuries to Indu. It affects her attitude of life. Akka’s strict rules as how Indu should
talk, dress, and behave gives mental pressure. Akka’s reprimand and orders to do this
and avoid doing that stimulates Indu to escape from the hell of the house immediately.
At one stage, Indu leaves her house where the orthodox rules strongly spread out. She
decolonizes herself by marrying Jayant, who is of a different caste. Akka, however,
remains unmoved by such irregular protests and constantly refuses to relax her grip as
long as she lives. When she becomes ill, she expresses her desire to meet Indu.

One leaves the message of Akka’s illness and her desire to meet Indu so she
comes back. In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Saru returns her parental home to escape
from her husband’s brutal sexual assaults at every day night likewise Indu returns her
home to get solace herself from Jayant’a sexual humiliation. Both of Saru and Indu’s
arrival to their parental home is mainly to escape from their predicaments and also in
the state of homelessness as Virginia Woolf says ‘no room’ for women who lives in the
patriarchal society. Akka feels that Indu is the right heiress. She wills her entire
property including the house in her name. Shashi Deshpande highlights the maternal
aspects of tradition as assets is handed over by Akka to her granddaughters. Indu
notices Akka, who even in the face of death she keeps her face a quiet dignity. “There
was,” Indu recalls after Akka’s death,” a triumphant gleam in them [Akka’s eyes]. I
could almost see her thoughts … I made you come home, didn’t I? I brought you back,
didn’t I?” (RS 20).
Indu gets pity when she comes to know about the pathetic story of Akka after her death through Narmadaatya, daughter of Indu’s grandfather. She feels sorry for Akka’a miserable marital rape and her submission of her father, her husband, or her son. She worries for Akka’s predicament. Indu thinks that Akka suffers from marital rape whereas she suffers from marital humiliation. She finds Jayant a man of her own choice is nothing but the image of patriarchal societal set up. Indu, who teases the older women’s submissiveness in front of their husbands, later realizes her pathetic situation and her step by step surrender and submit to Jayant.

She shocked herself thinking of her current submissive position to Jayant. She understands then that it is not for love but because she does not want to create conflict. She expresses her pathetic state that, “I had clung tenaciously to Jayant, to my marriage, not for love alone, but because I was afraid of failure. I had to show them that my marriage, that I, was a success ... And so I went on lying, even to myself” (RS 36). She herself says that, “But twice in my life I had thought I was free. Once when I left home as a young girl. And the second time, when, once again I left the family and returned to Jayant. Both times I found out how wrong I was. New bonds replace the old: that is all” (RS 36).

The root of all her psychological problems is feelings of not only ‘futility’, but of total blankness, of ‘emptiness’. Jayant whom she loved treats her as a traditional based Indian woman. But Indu a sensitive intelligent woman suppresses her femininity and her human demands in the name of marriage because it denies her fullness of experience. Indu's struggle for selfhood, her struggle towards liberation of the mind, her struggle for an emotional and intellectual definition of herself as a self-actualizing person is in a sense a fight against her womanhood.

She felt limited by her sex and resented her womanhood because it closed many doors to her. Shashi Deshpande in *Roots and Shadows* raise the issues of woman’s human demand for freedom and her need for love, nurturance and how to strike a balance between her wifehood, motherhood, profession and spiritual fulfillment. Indu
refuses to be mother of a child because she thinks it makes her to feel trapped in a
negative situation and threatens her positive struggle for independence.

For Shashi Deshpande, as for her sensitive and intelligent women, though
modern, essentially Indian in sensibility, an autonomous self in a society that is largely
conventional in its outlook is a myth. The struggle of these women to give shape and
content to their individual existence in a sexist society culminates in a crisis and ends in
compromise. Indu had sworn proudly that she would never pretend

Jean Baker Miller says in her work *Towards a New Psychology of Women*
(1976) that, “Women stay with, build on, and develop in a context of attachment and
affiliation with other” (83). Women combine and manage their selves in the service of
home, husband and children and they rest their sense of identity and value on it. They
see themselves in relation to others. Women find themselves psychologically confined
to various roles of wife, mother and daughter.

In *That Long Silence* Shashi Deshpande portrays the woman protagonist Jaya
exactly as what Miller says. She has crystallized Jaya’s inner world in this novel. Jaya is
a modern educated woman. She is rooted in tradition from her childhood itself. She has
neither courage nor will to justify her own choice. This is her first predicament. Jaya’s
father motivates her in all ways to expose her talent. He sends Jaya to convent for her
study. Unfortunately he was died at her age of fifteen. Jaya then comes to the control of
her brother. He considers Jaya a burden so he marries her to Mohan.

Jaya’ husband Mohan is an ordinary Indian male. In Mohan’s point of view the
real ‘strength’ of woman lies in her complete dedication for her husband and family. He
wishes to get married a woman who has a good academic qualification and brought up
well by tradition. As Jaya has the expected qualification of Mohan, he accepts her to
get marry. In an occasion Mohan tells Jaya openly that, “You know, Jaya, the first day I
met you at your Kamukaku’s house, you were talking to your brother, Dinkar, and
somehow you sounded so much like that girl. I think it was at that moment that I
decided I would marry you”. (TLS 90)
The success beyond the marriage is mutual understanding and love rather social demands or expectation but Jaya’s marriage was organized by tradition rather romance. They lead to start their life for compromise than love. They begin to live on social fear and there is on mutual need of each other. This becomes the main cause of their failure to understand each other. This is Jaya’s second predicament.

Their marital life grows insecure. It, further, becomes lifeless kind of married life by the futile suggestions give by Vanitamani that ‘a husband is a sheltering tree’, and Dada’s advises her to ‘be good to Mohan’. These suggestions make up her mind psychologically to subjugate and tolerate anything for him. Ever since Jaya gets married, she has done nothing but wait. She says in agony that, “Waiting for Mohan to come home, waiting for children to be born, for them to start school, waiting for them to come home, waiting for the milk, the servant, the lunch carrier man” (TLS 30).

This mechanical process of waiting creates emptiness in her life. This is her third predicament. Jaya’s seventeen years of her married life with Mohan is led only on physical level in a superficial manner. It is frustrating and depressing ordeal that Jaya has undergone. Jaya feels a disgusting experience to live with a man who does not love. Her dedication to her family does not give her happy. It fails to provide any intellectual or emotional fulfillment to Jaya. Marriage and home do not give any freedom to her as a woman. She chooses for silence, obedience, surrender, subordination, timidity and passive acceptance of things in life. Like Gandhari, Jaya blindly follows the path of tradition without exercising her intellect. She deliberately turns a blind eye towards Mohan. This is a common predicament for many Indian women in the contemporary society.

Shashi Deshpande has expressed the unsure attitude of contemporary educated modern women in India through the character of Jaya. These women can neither settle themselves to a new situation when their husbands ignore them and crush their ambition in life nor throw off their husbands easily because the husband is like “a sheltering tree” to the traditional based Indian society.

The process of changing the name of a woman after marriage is a common custom to some of Indian orthodox family. It is a painful to women as it snatches their
previous identity. Jaya’s name is changed from Jaya to Suhasini after marriage. She unwillingly agrees to her new name “Suhasini” given by her husband means, “a smiling, placid, motherly woman. A woman who lovingly nurtured her family. A woman who caped”. (TLS 16)

Jaya and Suhasini are the two facets of the same coin. Jaya is name given by her father at her parental home which means ‘victory’. Suhasini steeped into tradition and Jaya trying to break free from the shackles of tradition. The result is a fragmented self, indecisive between these two personalities. To conform to the ideals of a wife and a mother she suppresses her emotional need which makes her lonely and vulnerable.

Here Shashi Deshpande beautifully exposes the major problem of woman’s subjugation that women creativity. In *That Long Silence*, the female protagonist Jaya is a victim of the problem. As she is being a woman she is not allowed by society to be as her own wish. She becomes a puppet in the hands of her own husband Mohan who on certain situations encourages her to continue her writing, but when she writes the realistic story about the relationship between man - woman and their sex, Mohan tight the treads of puppets and makes her stop writing. Fearing the silence of Mohan that might spoil the peace of her marital peace, she decides to give up writing.

The same suffocating of creativity has to be seen in the novel *Roots and Shadows* and *The Binding Vine*. Indu in *Roots and Shadows* has squeezed by her creative desire as society as well as her husband Jayant wants her to obey to what the editor or the publisher asks her to write. Whereas Mira, the mother-in-law of Urmil, hides her poetry from the world as she is chided by the man poet name Venu that the writing poetry is a profession of men not for women and by giving child birth is their poetry. Since she fears the society that will mock at her, she never expresses her talent to the world.

In *The Binding Vine* Mira who is already suffered by her unwilling marriage, recoils further when her name is changed as “Nirmala” which thrusts on her. But unlike Jaya, Mira refuses to accept and proclaims that, “Nirmala, they call, I stand statue still.
Do you build the new without raising the old? A tablet of rice a pencil of gold. Can they make me Nirmala? I am Mira” (BV 101).

Shashi Deshpande, in The Binding Vine discusses Urmí’s sexuality and her ‘passion’. It explores the need of working women’s head heart and further down the anatomy. The Binding Vine gives an insight into the psychological suffering of the woman character Urmí, a lecturer. Unlike Shashi Deshpande’s women protagonists Saru, Indu and Jaya, Urmí’s predicament is totally different. She is grieving over the death of her one year old Female baby Anu. Urmí separates herself mentally from her mother Inni, her husband, Kishore and her sister-in-law vanna.

Shahsi Deshpande portrays Urmí to control over her grief and have a balanced mind to take her life as ease. She leads her life better than Deshpande’s earlier protagonists. J. P. Tripathi says, “Urmila, the sailor’s wife and college teacher, is more self-reliant and has an identity different from that of her husband; she is self-respecting and does not want to live on Kishore’s money. She is, however, a sensitive vine and need Kishore as an Oak to entwine herself around” (BV 152).

Shashi Deshpande describes Urmí’s alienation in the novel. Urmí has got married Kishore of her own choice. She is distressed of her married life. She is a financially emancipated woman. She has developed a kind of super ego in herself. Because of having super ego, Urmí denies submitting before her husband, Kishore. Even she cannot bear the subservient role of Vanaa, her friend and sister-in-law, and her mother Innie before their spouses. But she cannot go away from her nature-bound role, especially the role of the sex, wife and mother. From the very first day of her married life Urmí comes to know that Kishore has no love on her. She feels a distance between them. Kishore looks as ‘he has trapped’.

As Kishore works for the Merchant Navy people often visit Kishore’s house. There is ‘no room’ for Urmí. She starts to feel separated from her husband. She cannot bear with Kishore’s departure. She makes an effort to tell him twice that, “Each time you leave me, the parting is like death” (BV 139), but Kishore, an archetypal Indian
husband, fails to realize her inner feelings rather he finds solution in the physical relationship. Urmi expects solace from her husband Kishore, after the death of her only daughter Anu.

Kishore, a business oriented man, is completely reserved of her daughter’s death he then cuts off his talk even from his closest familial members. Urmi rightly asserts about Kishore that, “Kishore will never remove his armour, there is something in him I will never reach. I have lived with the hope that someday I will. Each relationship, always imperfect, survives on hope. Am I to give up this hope?” (BV 141). Urmi is aware of psychological fear. She suffers from aloofness for her husband’s departure. She says in a pathetic mood that,

But somewhere on the way I seem to have lost that confidence. Now there is fear - the fear of Kishore never returning home, lost in the seas somewhere as one of his friends was; the fear of Kishore turning away from me, a distant look on his face; the fear of his not wanting to come back to me. Yes, that’s the thing, that’s what I am most afraid of. (BV 8)

While highlighting the protagonist Urmi’s alienation, Shashi Deshpande touches the theme of marital rape in the character of Mira who is a mother-in-law of Urmi. Shashi Deshpande’s main purpose of handling this theme is to point out the realistic picture of man’s freedom and women’s suppression in sexual act in the male dominated society. It is clearly understand how Friuedan view is also support the man’s freedom and women’s suppression. Friuedan view is that for a women as far as a 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 avoided.

In a sense, female sexual problems are by products of the suppression of woman’s potentialities and talents which the mystique of feminine fulfillment ignores. Feminine psychoanalytic writers oppose his view and rejects man’s freedom and women’s subjection as natural phenomena. Today’s women are deeply aware of their
writings and duties, women feel that there is no excuse for keeping the down anymore. Feminine feminists reject they discard male constructed rules of femininity and try to introduce their equality and their individuality. Many writers have come forward to protest and to project and depict the real woman in their works.

The novel *A Matter of Time* focuses on the society’s control and pressure, emotional barring and its’ abuse. Shashi Deshpande depicts how this social conflict has caused modern women of today to feel torn between demands and requirements of tradition on one side, and the aspirations, freedom and equality of the modern world on the other. The novel says about the women protagonist Sumi’s emotional suffering, societal anxiety and explores her psyche. In this novel, Sumi’s husband Gopal walks out of his life without giving apt reason for his renunciation of the family. Keerthi Ramachandra in *Of Fate and Eternity*, *Biblio* says the scene of Gopal’s desertion that,

One evening, while Sumi is watching a film on T.V. about circus, “without the dirt, the smells, the fear and despair of the real thing, but sanitized bacteria free” Gopal tells her he wants to talk to her. And without any preamble says what he has to. He waits for Sumi’s reaction, but within moments both realize that there’s nothing more to be said he leaves as quietly as he had entered. (21)

Gopal deserts Sumi even he can’t find out any fault and give any reason to her. Actually the main reason of Gopal’s walking out on his family is nothing but his childhood experiences. His childhood was abnormal. His father took his brother’s widow for wife. Gopal used to think that he was born of that incestuous relationship. Then he sees Sudha, his half-sister, reduces from her affectionate self to be an irritable and self - centered one after her surgery and the loss of her husband. This event makes him to realize the truth that one is inevitably alone. And finally, Gopal’s writing an article, the students’ attack on him and his feeling of meaninglessness lead to this departure. Gopal himself knows that, “Marriage is not for everyone. The demand it makes - a lifetime of commitment - is not possible for all of us” (MT 69).
Sumi admits Gopal’s decision with patience. The quietness of Sumi makes her a mystery in the eyes of other people. Shashi Deshpande, by portraying Sumi’s life questions the tradition that the society permits a man to desert his commitment of a householder in the name of religion or anything else but a wife cannot to do so. Y.S. Sunita Reddy remarks in *Marriage and Sexuality in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande* that,

Episodes from history and mythology bear witness to men who were venerated for their selflessness while no though was given to the silent suffering and martyrdom of their wives. Lakshmana’s steadfastness and devotion finds no parallel in Indian mythology, while Siddhartha is hailed for spurning the luxury and comfort of princely life in pursuit of knowledge. Their respective spouses Urmila and Yashodhara, however, remain shadowy figures in the background, doomed to live a life of anonymity and insignificance. (160)

Gopal, leaving the family’s burden and responsibilities to Sumi, prepares to live alone. Sumi is quite shocking for her husband Gopal’s abandon at first. She becomes upset. She looks quite tensed and hollow-eyed. She does not know what to do the next. Sumi returns with her mother’s house with her three daughters Aru, Charu and Seema.

In the house both of her parents Kalyani and Shripati live in a strangely oppressive silence. In the *A Matter of Time* the most salient example of silent suffering is Kalyani Shripathi has not spoken to Kalyani for thirty-five years as Kalyani loss her four-year old mentally retarded son in a railway station. Shripati, like Gopal, does not openly explain his reasons for abandoning his wife Kalyani. Gopal’s desertion brings all shame, embarrassment and humiliation to Sumi.

As Carol Gilligan notes in her *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (1982) notes that the male morality has a ‘justice orientation’ while the female morality has a ‘responsibility orientation’, both the male members Shripahi and Gopal shut the life of their family. They also ‘justify’ their detachment
with their family. And the whole burden of the family lay down on the back of both the women Kalyani and Sumi in the name of responsibility.

Sumi like her mother, is a suffering oppressed. She becomes a question mark to the society. People around her starts to advise her to reunion to her husband Gopal. Shankar’s mother–in-law tells Sumi, “go back to your husband, he’s a good man. If you’ve done wrong, he’ll forgive you. And if he has-women shouldn’t have any pride” (MT 46). But Sumi tolerates all the humiliation for her daughters’ sake. Sumi not only suffer by emotional but also for economic. In the patriarchal society surviving, especially for deserted wife, is very difficult.

Shashi Deshpande has significant success in portraying woman as protagonist in plots centered round problems such as female marginalization, marital conflict, sexual repression, alienation and the search for self. In Small Remedies Shashi Deshpande explores the lives of three women, one is Savitribais Indorekar who obsesses with music, and second one a passionate believer in communism Munni and the third one is the protagonist Madhu with writing. These three women suffer a lot and struggle hard to emerge out.

SavitribaiIndorekar’s rebellious act to break away from her family for her love of music is not an isolated or individual decision. It rises above personal borders and becomes a part of the key social and political agendas that is undertaken by the late nineteenth century women such as PanditaRamabai, Anandibai Joshi, KashibaiKanetkar, TarabaiShinde etc. they are the women who has the courage to overcome the domineering social rule. Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922) was an Indian social reformer, a champion for the emancipation of women, and a pioneer in education. She acquired a reputation as a Sanskrit scholar. A brief outline comes below about them in order to understand the novel Small Remedies.

Anandibai Gopalrao Joshi (1865-1887) is one of the first South Asian female physicians and the first Indian female physician, to be trained in the tradition of Western medicine. She was the first female of Indian origin to study and graduate
with a degree in medicine in the United States. She is also believed to be the first Hindu woman to set foot on American soil.

Kashibai Kanitkar (1861-1948) is the first major woman writer in Marathi. Kashibai was born into an affluent Brahmin family in the town of Ashte in Sangli District, and according to the social custom of her days, her marriage was arranged at her age of nine to one Govind Vasudev Kanitkar who was seven years older than she was. Kashibai had no formal education, but with her progressive husband's strong encouragement, she learned to read, and gradually mastered many Marathi, Sanskrit, and English works. John Stuart Mill's *Subjugation of Women* had a powerful impact on her, and through her prolific and wide-ranging writing both fiction and non-fiction she promoted women's emancipation.

Tarabai Shinde (1850-1910) is a feminist activist who protested patriarchy and caste in 19th century India. She is known for her published work, *Stri Purush Tulana* (A Comparison between Women and Men), originally published in Marathi in 1882. The pamphlet is a critique of upper-caste patriarchy, and is often considered the first modern Indian feminist text. It was very controversial for its time in challenging the Hindu religious scriptures themselves as a source of women's oppression, a view that continues to be controversial and debated today.

The protagonist and the writer Madhu is Shashi Deshpande’s imaginary character. She has been suffering from her childhood for the gender discrimination. She is a sensitive and lonely daughter. She, like Urmī (*The Binding Vine*), and Manjari (*moving on*) lost her only son Adit. She leads her life full of misery and anguish. She often astonishes how the patriarchal society’s rules favour for men and unfavour to women. She recalls the liberated life of men and the subjugated life of women.

She is brought up in a liberal atmosphere by her father. Her father is so generous in his love and affection. She never feels the need of her mother as she enjoys her father’s fondness. Unfortunately her father died at her age of fifteen. She feels all the doors shattered and darkness around her. She lives with her guardian aunt Leela. In her aunt’s family, she feels uncomfortable with aunt’s husband Joe and their children Paula and Tony. She finishes her graduation on the money that has been left by her father.
Madhu puts full stop when the money finishes. Though Leela and Joe were ready to provide money for her education she refuses to pursue. She wants to be liberated and do not like to depend others. She asserts that, “I am determined. I will start working. I will earn my own money, become independent.”(RS 83)

She attains job of writing and editing his magazine City Views by Hamid Bhai, Joe’s friend. Madhu thinks this is the golden opportunity to her. She starts her life in a small room on rent where she experiences a sense of independence and fulfillment. In her happy world of independence, she marries with Som and becomes a mother of a son Aditya. Being an affectionate mother, she revolves her life around Aditya. She gives up her job to take care of him. She adopts a new identity as a devoted mother. Madhu’s sincere love for Som leads her to reveal the secret of her past life that she has one night experience of sex with her father’s friend Dalvi.

Madhu doesn’t expect that it becomes a reason for losing a peace of mind and happiness in her married life completely. It creates a violent quarrels and arguments between Madhu and Som. He starts to suspect her character. Madhu wants to exclude all matter to her husband in order to make intimacy between them. Som separates himself from Madhu. Adit and Som are entangled with this story of an unspoken violence. Som thinks it was an act of betrayal and is tormented by the thought of his wife’s sexuality.

Madhu once again becomes alone and insecure. She tastes the alienation. She has lost her father and loses her husband. As she has only relation her son she makes an imaginary conversation with her son. In a confessional mode she says, “What do I tell you, Adit? That I slept with a man when I was a girl, a child really, and your father can’t take it? That your father is tearing himself, apart, and me too, because of something that happened—and only once-years ago?” (SR 258).

Actually Madhu’s wants to erase the bitter memories of her past. But Som wants to know the real incident that what happened between Madhu and her father’s friend. In fact Som wants to cure himself in the process of healing his wife. So he says strongly to tell him the truth. Madhu who wants to forget the events hurts for Som constant compulsion. To Madhu, the realization is irritating. She says, “I know what the truth is
that Som wants from me: that it has not been happened, that I was a virgin when he married me. I begin to understand … that I had been raped, forced into the act that I was a victim, not a participant” (SR 258).

Madhu does not expect Som’s aggressive effect to her exposure. She expects mutual understanding and acceptance from her husband Som. She is shocked by his violent response. She does not have any lively remembrance of her single sexual experience at the age of fifteen especially in her weak state of mind. According to her she remains a ‘chaste’ woman. The constant clashes and arguments between Madhu and Som affect Aditya. Madhu gets annoyed but remains silent only for her son. The oppressive atmosphere force Adit from home to meet death in a bombed bus. Madhu’s pain is indescribable. Madhu gets grief, pain, anguish and agony. She blames on the male ego of her husband.

In Small Remedies, Shashi Deshpande is attempting much more than she did in her earlier novels. Small Remedies has gathered up, in one large sweep, the plurality, diversity and contradictions of our contemporary culture.

Shashi Deshpande’s novels are an exploration into the woman psyche and an understanding of the obscurities of life and the protagonist’s position in it. In her novels, Shashi Deshpande has strengthened the feminist movement by her deep analysis of man-woman relationship. Moving On is a family story of intimate spaces. It is a story about Manjari, an educated young widow. Emotional wounds, which are faced by the heroine, are absolutely unexpected in the novel. In this novel Moving On Manjari’s sexuality is explicitly portrayed by Shashi Deshpande. Trayee Sinha in A study of shashi Deshpande’s women characters: Feminism in search of identity rightly defines that, “only the body, his body, only my body, and my starved body. No thoughts, no feelings, only sensations” (257).

Shashi Deshpande generally ejects out her contemporary society’s women suppression in writings. Writing becomes an important means for her to fight for patriarchal set up. According to her, writing is being a symbol of rebellion; Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists employ rebellion as one of the ways to emancipation. They
are struggling hard, in order to establish independent identity and to break up of shackles that chain women’s creativity and individual talent for over many centuries.

Shashi Deshpande, in her earlier novels *The Dark Holds No Terrors, That Long Silence* and *Roots and Shadows*, defines the theme of extra marital relationship to exhibit how it helps them to realize their likes and dislikes of marital relationships but in *Moving On* she gives a different dimension of it. She also presents a complex character Manjari, in this novel, who tries to achieve her real self from her mental agony.

*Moving On* also projects Manjari as a woman who resists the patriarchal ideology and tries to live on her own terms. It is a story that begins, conventionally enough with a woman’s discovery of her father’s diary. As Manjari unlocks the past through its pages’ rescuing old memories and recasting events and responses, the present novel symbolizes the inner struggle of the heroine Manjar who marries Shyam at the age of eighteen and becomes a widow at twenty one.

The story begins with a woman protagonist Manjari’s discovery of her father’s diary. Her father Badhri Narayan is an anatomist. Her mother Mai is a writer. Manjari, who defines, opposes the things which she does not like and expresses her desire for freedom. Initially she is a nice girl as the society defines woman. She “needed everybody’s approval’ for doing anything and ‘was willing to do anything to please others” (MO 69), but she turns into a rebel only in the later part of her life. The socialization process in patriarchal societies desexualizes not only the body of a woman but also her mind and feelings. Manjari gives up medicine and marry Shyam. Manjari’s relationship with Shyam is based on lust rather love. Binod Mishra in *Taming the body to Harness the Soul: A Study of Shashi Deshpande’s Moving On* rightly points out their relationship that, “Their union was the union of two hungry bodies and it had too little scope of any discussion, say even of wooing”. (53)

Manjari begins her married life happily with Shyam. Their happiness continues till Manjari gives birth to Anand. The requirements, after Anand’s born, increase. Shyam a middle class man cannot afford and manage the family. Shyam’s continuous unfortunates in his working field make the situation worsen. Like Mohan (*That Long
Silence) and Gopal (A Matter of Time) Shyam abandons Manjari along with his ailing son Anand suffering in the lap of her. He does not bother about family and anything except his own problem. It causes an injury to their married life. It also creates a gap between them and produces a vacuum in their mutual understanding and love.

When Shyam was a lover he enacts his role perfect to Manjari. But after marriage he becomes an irresponsible husband to Manjari and a father to Anand. He fails to meet the practical responsibilities in his married life. Shyam’s professional failures and Anand’s illness turn Manjari to a state of depression. Shyam’s illegal relationship with Malu, Manjari’s sister creates him as a traitor in the eyes of Manjari. Manjari’s staying with her father’s house and her full time caring of her ailing son Anand make Shyam to think that Majari becomes disloyal to him.

This misunderstanding of Manjari on her husband Shyam creates a great mental conflict between them. Shyam, at the end, suffers his sense of guilt and commit suicide. Shyam is drowned into sea. Manjari, a challenging and conscious woman, becomes completely depressed. She suffers by her sexual desires. The rigid restrictions of the society cannot stop the desires of the body as well as mind. She fulfils her bodily appetite with a person Raman who lives in her upstairs house.

Manjari, who strongly opposes to marry Raja a widower later has intercourse with her tenant Raman, is psychologically observes that she feels that it is only a biological need and so she uses Raman as an outlet for her natural physical desire and there is nothing like love between them. This way Shashi Deshpande portrays the unpredictability of human behaviour. As psychologists believe that suppressed desires always crave for release here Manjari’s suppressed desires cross all its barriers to get its due. Manjari struggles both physically and mentally. Physically she suffers by her bodily desire with Raman and by mentally she is threatened by the mafia underworld and subjects her to psychological pressure, and then, forces her to sell out her ancestral home.

Devyani’s guilt about her love affair with a married man Ashok Chinnappa is described in the novel In the Country of deceit. The narrator of the story Devayani, Mudhol is a woman almost twenty seven years of age. The novel begins with Devayani
and her elder sister Savi. They rebuild their old house in Rajnur. After the house-warming party, Devayani chooses to live alone in the new house. She lives all her life in Rajnur after her parents’ death. Devyani leads her life with calm and independent in Rajnur. Teaching English and creating a garden are her entertainment. She translates a Kannada book based on the History of Rajnur. Devayani has a conventional and traditional appearance but really she has unconventional ideas. Rani, a former actress who settles in the town with her husband and three children, becomes Devayani’s intimate friend.

Devyani’s early youth experience is the main cause to take decision to live alone. Devayani spends all her youthful years to take care of her invalid mother Pushpa who suffers from epilepsy. Her last days are full of pain and suffering. She bears the burden of unhappiness. After the death of her mother, Devyani’s life becomes empty. She believes that marriage without love but compromise never gives happiness. She has heard that her mother’s marriage was happened by her compromise.

Her father faces a series of disappointments. She also knows her father’s death which was not an accident but a suicide. She assists her sister when she was pregnant and at the time of child birth. She also helps Kshama during the time of her presence with her in Bangalore. She then helps to Sindhu after her surgery. These domestic chores make her to feel family relations and its burden. She doesn’t like to take the burden in the name of husband and children. She is not willing to lose her ‘self’ in the name of marriage. As she says,

All these years I had been the accompanist to other people’s lives. First I had been a follower of my spirited, beautiful elder sister, then in charge of my parents’ lives, the observer of their tragedy. For a brief while I had acted as my cousin Kshama’s helper and later I had been Sindhu’s attendant after her surgery. Now, for the first time, I had to play solo. I had no one else to look after, no one to think about. I felt as if I was waiting for the curtain to go up, waiting for something to happen. (CD 8)

She wishes to live independently. She wants to grow as an individual. She rejects all the proposals and suggestions of marriage. Sindhu, who suffers from breast
cancer and lives in America, stresses her to get marry soon. Kshama, her cousin, writes her to return to Bangalore and work there in which field she likes as there are good offers available at there. But she is fed up with the stereotypical question about her marriage. She longs for a moment of supreme happiness in life. She says, “I want that, I thought, I want a needlepoint of extreme happiness, I want a moment in my life which will make me feel I am touching the sky” (CD 24-25).

Devyani’s desire to breathe fresh air washes all the age old conventions and orthodox rules. That is the reason that Devyani doesn’t feel guilty when she has a relationship with Ashok Chinnappa, a new DSP, and Rajnur. Devyani meets Ashok at Rani’s house in a function. They fall in love at the first sight. Even Devyani knows that Ashok is a married man and a father of ten years old girl; she falls in physical relationship with him.

Shashi Deshpande here explores deep into the psyche of Devayani and exposes that the truth that beneath the surface of her sophisticated front, there lies the primitive instinct of well polished over by the outward mask of the so called civilization, that explodes at an unguarded moment and betrays the ugly beast of what Freud calls ‘Libido’. That means the blind sex force that craves for fulfillment at any cost. Only this psychological explanation would justify what seems to be a mockery of Devyani when she takes a reversal in her behaviour. She knows well that their affair is a relationship without a future and that it ends in a blind pathway.

When Shashi Deshpande was asked a question, whether Devayani’s kind of love is odd asked by Usha in Magical Terrains – Shashi Deshpande, she agrees and says that her novel “explores the slippery, treacherous terrain that love takes people into” (01). She realizes that she has been exploring the idea of love in all of her novels. She further says the availability of different kinds of love and the different faces of love. She also finds herself increasingly interested in the idea of goodness in human beings.

Shashi Deshpande, by presenting the character Devyani, expresses the private area of her women characters. She openly talks about women’s sexuality, physical relations and sex without marriage. Even here and there the women, like Devyani, live in the patriarchal society, it is indeed unacceptable for an Indian unmarried girl to make
a relation with a married man - as Devayani did in the novel in *the country of deceit* her
culture cannot permit her to do that. But that is not the limitation of Shashi Deshpande’s
women characters. According to her love is unlimited. She believes that love is a basic
human emotion and there is nothing boring about it.

Shashi Deshpande also says that love cannot be distinguished according to age. She says in an interview to DNA in *My New book is about adult love: Shashi Deshpande* that, “it is very difficult to distinguish love according to the level of mental
maturity. A 60-year-old man or a woman can fall in love and behave like a child. People
realize the true meaning of love only when they fall in love” (01).

Devyani’s predicament is love - an unmarried woman’s love with a married
man. Even her sister Savi and her relations Sindhu and Shree condemn this relation
crossing the line morality. Devayani continues meeting with Ashok at many places
including her own house. Since she knows that her relationship with Ashok is
unacceptable on moral ground, she conceals the relationship from everybody and often
meets him secretly. She then, slowly enters into the country of deceit. That is the
dishonesty to her conscience and this is the reason for her predicament. She struggles
between her bodily desire and societal norms.

In *Shadow Play*, Shashi Deshpande investigates into the emotions of each of her
characters, as she gradually goes into the difficulties of everyday life. The story covers
the entire range of familial relationships, the misapprehensions, marital bond, career
ambitions and the frustrations of growing up children and also that of not being able to
have them. As the writer allows narrating some of the chapters by Gopal, the father of
Aru and her two sisters, Shashi Deshpande brings in the male point of view. Gopal’s
desertion of his family at essential stage is the cause of much painful. But the author’s
decision to give him a voice helps to convey his point of view and perhaps redeems him
to the readers and eventually his daughters. Gopal speaks of, “Paschatap and
prayaschitta: remorse and atonement,” wonders if they go together and speculates, “…
maybe they are two faces of the same coin; neither is complete without the other” (MT
37).
Shashi Deshpande has explored the modern Indian middle class woman’s psychological tribulations both in the institution of marriage and their basic anxiety at their parental home in all her novels. Shashi Deshpande’s psycho-analytic ways of presenting women characters are not only enacted but also lived as real human beings who have flesh and blood. When one goes through Shashi Deshpande’s novels thoroughly, It is clearly understood to him/ her that how she minutely watches the patriarchal society’s women problems and their psychological sufferings present in her work.

Shashi Deshpande very strongly insists to all her novels that woman’s childhood experiences are the main cause to mould them in future. As Horey says that the repressed resentment and resulting from a variety of parental behaviors weakens the childhood need for safety, and leads anxiety, Shashi Deshpande regards that the patriarchal society undermines women’s strength from their childhood day onwards in the name of tradition and cultural rules.

Through the characters Saru, Jaya, Indu, Urmi, Sumi, Manju and Manjari, she has depicted the lack of understanding and communication that often tarnishes the relationship. The changing attitude of these educated and intelligent women leads to disharmony in their marriage. Men who have the traditional mentality also fail to see that the woman also needs to realize her hidden outside the marital sphere. Even Urmi and Sumi are not suppressed by the dominating husbands; they feel an unbridgeable gap, created by their husband’s indifference. Both realize that whether they are ignored by their husbands’ traits.

Thus, Shashi Deshpande effectively defines their problems and plights, longings and desires, failure and fault. Her protagonists’ predicaments are not of the stereotypes - to a fixed idea of how a woman should be rather than of ordinary woman fighting to be her ‘self’. She considers that husband and wife’s relationship should be treated on the line of equal rights. Once the wife gets her right position in the family there is no question of her being annoyed. Her novels present mostly a typical, middle class
housewife’s life because her main concern is the urge to find oneself, to create space for oneself, to grow on one’s own.

Her female characters are well educated but they are frustrated either sexually or professionally. They have their inner conflicts and quest for identity. She wants to support the right of women and make them aware of their rights in the society. The strong point about her novels is her delineation of the woman’s inner world. Her female protagonists struggle to find their own voice and are continuously in search to define them.

The following third chapter describes Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists attempt to escape from their predicaments.