PREFACE

The text of the thesis has been organised into seven chapters to attempt a coherent study of human relationship in the novels of Shashi Deshpande in modern Indian context.

The first chapter ‘Introduction’ highlights the subject of investigation and the general outline of the chapters that follow. It offers a broad spectrum of human relationship and its different aspects. The theoretical position about human relationships has been stated and the novelist’s views of human relationships with reference to her novels have been considered. Giving a brief account of the novelist’s life and literary career, her predecessors and contemporaries, an attempt has been made to place her among the Indian English novelists dealing with human relationships in their works.

The second chapter ‘Filial Relationship’ explores and assesses parent-child relationship with focus on mother–daughter and father-daughter relationship in Shashi Deshpande’s novels, one by one in chronological sequence.

The next three chapters take up the different aspects of man-woman relationship in Shashi Deshpande’s novels. The third chapter ‘Conjugal Relationship’ discusses the relationship between man and woman after marriage as depicted in each of her novels. The fourth chapter ‘Extra-marital Relationship’ offers an indepth study of the relationship forged between man and woman outside marriage. It covers both pre-marital and post-marital relationships and some new emerging unconventional relationships like same sex relationship etc. The fifth chapter ‘Professional Relationship’ deals with the relationship between man and woman as professionals at offices and work places, and even outside.

The sixth chapter ‘Other Relationships’ considers and explores certain aspects of human relationships which do not come under the broad spectrum of filial relationship or man-woman relationship dealt with in the preceding chapters-Second to Fifth. It brings into sharp focus vis-a-vis individual texts the various aspects of human relationships between siblings, cousins, and various other blood relatives or non-blood relatives.
The last and seventh chapter ‘Conclusion’ sums up the findings of the study of the presentation of human relationships in Shashi Deshpande’s novels. An attempt has been made to trace the similarities and differences to point out how her successive novels make a steady progress towards presenting human relationship in the modern Indian context transcending feminist concerns. Besides, it seeks to reveal Shashi Deshpande’s positions and propositions in regard to some specific nagging queries that exercise her readers’ mind. Moreover, it raises certain questions for further investigation and intellectual exercise.

The ‘Conclusion’ is followed by a comprehensive list of recent ‘Bibliography’ of the literature relevant to the present study, classified on the basis of their genre.

As regards the methods, the study is primarily thematic but analytical, critical and comparative. As Shashi Deshpande has employed post-modern technique of deconstructing Indian patriarchal set up to see human relationship in a new light, her emerging views of human relationship are compared and contrasted with those of the contemporary Indian and foreign novelists relevant to the subject.

All possible efforts have been made to make this study systematic and comprehensive despite limitations of time and availability of materials. But the study has its own limitations as certain human relationships such as surrogate relationship, one-night stand, etc. Which are forged now a days but not presented in the novels of Shashi Deshpande so far.