CHAPTER I

Probing Togetherness: An Introduction

Human relationship is what a writer is involved with. Person to person and person to society relationships—these are the two primary concerns of a creative writer and, to me, the former is of immense importance. My preoccupation is with interpersonal relationships and human emotions (Deshpande as qtd. in Pathak, The Fiction of Shashi Deshpande 252).

Such a clarity of one’s convictions, transparency of thought and expression, an attempt to co-relate every character and every incident with an average human being, by going beyond striking a chord; the name is Shashi Deshpande. When a writer is so vocal, so clear but so simple and straightforward in outpouring straight from her heart; no one can one resist wondering at the depth underlying this amazing simplicity and fluidity of expression. Deshpande’s works simply exude realism and empathy, sweeping any one off his feet with her down-to-earth attitude, reflected in the delineation of complex interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships form a vital segment of her fiction whether it is The Dark Holds No Terrors or That Long Silence or any other novel. This study is an attempt to analyze the portrayal of various kinds of relationships and an assortment of dynamics underlying these relationships in Shashi Deshpande’s fiction, considering the fact that right from the novels written in the earliest phase of her writing career to the latest ones, there is a revelation of Deshpande’s sincerity in upholding the greatness of interpersonal relationships—imperfect, intriguing, challenging and continuously in evolution. Her novels present a complex world of intricate interpersonal relationships between multifaceted men and women in different age groups and gendered roles. The old tradition bound world is in conflict with the modern world, as the old patterns of behavior no longer seem to be acceptable. The argument becomes intense leading to a quest for self-definition, to relate to others with a degree of conviction guided by clarity about one’s own role.

Inter-personal relationships mean the social links, associations or connections or relationship between two or more people. These include a variety of familial relationships
like fatherhood, motherhood, sibling relationships and relationships through marriage. Inter-personal relationships also include casual relationships, relationships of companionship, platonic love relationships and relationship between a man and a woman who are bonded together for a lifetime. Friendship between two people which generally involves establishment of some common behavioral grounds and unconditional acceptance also comes under the domain of inter-personal relationships.

Villard and Whipple, in their book *Beginnings in Relational Communication*, have put forth their views about the need for interpersonal relationships, in a very discerning and insightful tone. They feel that, “Ultimately, we only come to truly know and experience ourselves through the eyes, the thoughts and the touch of others” (176). This viewpoint of Villard and Whipple explicates that we all know intuitively that every relationship we have with others is a manifestation of the kind and quality of relationship we have with our own selves, the relationship that exists entirely and intuitively within our own selves. Isolation is the greatest fear of every human being and interdependence is valued more than independence by every human being in the long run. Relatedness perpetuates dependence on each other or it can be vice-versa. Whether relatedness fosters mutual reliance or reliance promotes relatedness; it cannot be denied that relations are the essence of human existence, nearly as fundamental to survive as water and air. Every individual spends his entire life in building and preserving relationships with others. These associations between all human beings like parent with child, husband with wife and the relationship between two friends are very vital for our existence. A satisfactory relationship depends on the depth of attachment and interdependence between two persons. Attachment encompasses honesty, care, affection, warmth, acceptance and understanding. These are all abstract and relative terms and the value of each varies from person to person. Nevertheless, no human being can live without affection and care of his loved ones. He also knows that in order to gain acceptance and love from others; he has to strive hard in terms of providing care and affection to them. Therefore, it becomes very clear that developing relationships is a two-way process where both the persons have to contribute in terms of emotions and feelings. Reciprocal feelings form the basis of emotions and the absence of reciprocity leads to dwindling of bonds, eventually making a person lonely, dejected and unable to lead a peaceful and contented life.
Despite of relationships being an important source of meaning, happiness, enjoyment and love; their significance is often overlooked. These are generally taken for granted and often there is no serious attempt at the maintenance and nurturance of loving bonds. Hence, relations weave in and weave out of human life. Upholding and sustenance of relations is generally more difficult than their inception and development. Many a time, there are warning signs of deterioration and dissolution of relationships, but the human eye takes the bonds granted and mentally shuts down to all the warning signals. Considering the plethora of benefits we derive from various relationships; the effort required to form, maintain and restore these seem a small price to pay. Nothing in life is static and if circumstances change over time, individuals change over time; relations can also not remain static forever. Dialectics of relationship is based on the idea that relations are dynamic entities, ever evolving and changing.

Family is the cradle for inter-personal relationships to begin, grow and develop. In the midst of great social, economic and political changes over the centuries, Indian families have witnessed great changes. These changes have caused turbulence in the family-structure and cracks in the solid foundations of joint family, ushering psychological and emotional isolation along with physical distancing. Family size has shrunk and family relations which encompassed strong ties among various generations are no more witnessed. Loss of intergenerational relations has made every individual feel threatened, insecure and lonely. Various kinship bonds, like the husband-wife relations or the parent-child relations are built on with a sense of belongingness, trust and dependence; the absence of which leads to bruised psyche and imperfect relationships. It is a pity that the humdrum of fast life makes us amass material prosperities, without accruing any emotional and relational gains. Just as we have progressed dramatically in almost all aspects of human endeavor over the past two centuries; interpersonal relationships have also changed. It is a sad commentary on human life that man now is richer in material wealth but poorer in emotional quotient and happiness than his ancestors. Therefore, there is an urgent need to nourish ourselves and our relationships to support more openness and trust, to gain more stability and happiness in life.
There is a positive ray of hope as Shashi Deshpande, the celebrated writer articulates through her novels that despite a lot of differences and disappointments with his or her family members; a mature person generally tries to build bridges of connectivity. Though in moments of anger or selfishness, he for a while tries to fake these bonds or even wants to get rid of these bonds but social displacement and isolation is so fearsome that he is incessantly menaced by the fear of being left alone. Consequently, despite his irritation with unlike minds, he accepts the people as they are and thinks of some measures to adapt and adjust.

Shashi Deshpande, a writer indisputably of relationships, is a low profile but significant contributor to the realm of Indian writing in English. Born in Dharwad, a small town of Karnataka; she is the daughter of a great Kannada writer and Sanskrit scholar Adya Rangachar, more commonly known as Sriranga. She inherited a love for reading and an intellectual bent of mind from her father. That is why, she became a voracious reader right from her childhood and subsequently acquired degrees in Economics, Law and English and a diploma in Journalism. But she regrets about getting no guidance from her father when she tells the interviewer Vanamala Viswanatha, “I would say he was somewhat detached from us... never guided us. Maybe if he had directed us at an early age, I could’ve done better. He never did that” (Pathak 232). Nevertheless, Deshpande’s father had liberal and radical ideas, which helped in shaping her outlook, despite the fact that he never forced his ideas on his children. He was a man of ideas and his plays focused on ideas and not on characters. On the other hand, Deshpande, beginning with her first novel, writes of characters, their relationships with one another and the practical realities of human existence. However, the seeds of craftsmanship which were subconsciously sown in her mind in the intellectual climate of her father’s home, flourished into panache for free flow of words on the paper. It is different that the growth cycle from a seed to a plant (writing stories) and subsequently a flourishing tree (writing novels) was quite slow; as she started writing quite late in her life when she wrote for the first time about her experiences at England. Deshpande has explained her growth as a writer, to the interviewer Vanamala Viswanatha, as to how she incidentally became a writer when her father sent her writings to ‘Deccan Herald’. Gradually, she started working for ‘The Onlooker’ and wrote short stories with such a
passion and craze that she never thought about the theme or the technique or even the publisher (Pathak 232-37). Jane Austen’s writings have a profound influence on Shashi Deshpande and love for Somerset Maugham was “just a passing phase.” She is still fond of reading Jane Austen’s works but makes it clear to Vanamala Viswanatha, “I still read her regularly. But I don’t think there have been any conscious influences on my writing as such” (Pathak 233).

Shashi Deshpande started her literary quest with *Roots and Shades*, though it was published later and *The Dark Holds No Terrors* was her first published novel. She has written ten novels till date: *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980), *If I Die Today* (1982), *Come Up and Be Dead* (1983) *Roots and Shadows* (1983), *That Long Silence* (1988), *The Binding Vine* (1993), *A Matter Of Time* (1996), *Small Remedies* (2000), *Moving On* (2004) and *In The Country Of Deceit* (2008). Her all novels except *If I Die Today* and *Come Up and Be Dead* focus on the theme of relationships and give some food for thought to the readers. *The Legacy and Other Stories* (1978) was her first collection of short stories. Her other collections of short stories are: *It Was Dark, The Miracle, It Was the Nightingale* and *The Intrusion and Other Stories*. A few of her stories were later expanded to novels and about the main theme of her stories, G. S. Amur says in Preface to *The Legacy and Other Stories*, “Woman’s struggle, in the context of contemporary Indian society, to find and preserve her identity as wife, mother and, most important of all, as human being is Shashi Deshpande’s major concern as a creative writer, and this appears in all her important stories” (Amur as qtd. in Pathak 15). Amur feels that Deshpande has concentrated on the typical dilemma of urban middle class women in her shorter fiction. Her major concern is to depict the anguish and conflict of the middle class educated Indian woman who is perplexed on being caught between patriarchy and tradition on the one hand, and self-expression and individuality on the other hand.

Shashi Deshpande has written four novels for children too: *A Sum-Adventure*, *The Only Witness*, *The Hidden Treasure* and *Narayanpur Incident*. Though she has dabbled in various genres of fiction i.e., short stories, children literature and detective fiction; it is on the basis of her nine novels that she has earned a reputation of
considerable worth. *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is Shashi Deshpande’s favorite work. She told Vanamala, “It has a simple theme and fewer characters. It gripped me so much that I whipped through the writing” (Pathak 234). Deshpande also values *That Long Silence* as “more meaningful” than her other novels as it “deals with a much larger issue—the long silence of women” (Pathak 251).

Shashi Deshpande is a writer gifted with rare sensibility and of late, has received a great deal of interest in her works by various critics. She is indisputably a writer of relationships, though it is quite surprising that this aspect of her fiction has remained relatively neglected so far by the critics. A spate of critical works on Deshpande has been published which reflect a number of other concerns: a fervent desire of the protagonists to analyze themselves, loneliness of the modern generation particularly of the educated middle class women, various images of women and the socio-cultural angle of her themes and techniques. Dr. S. Prasanna Sree, in her book *Woman in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande: A Study*, has made an attempt to analyze the portrayal of women by Deshpande, thereby applauding their tribulations under the influence of clash between tradition and modernity. She has analyzed the novels of Deshpande by focusing on the main protagonists who feel suffocated in the traditional roles assigned to them by society and ultimately succeed in their search to redefine their roles and expectations towards their near and dear ones. Mukta Atrey and Viney Kirpal in their book, *Shashi Deshpande: A Feminist Study of Her Fiction*, attempt to read Deshpande’s work in a feminist framework which is certainly Indian in socio-cultural perspectives. They have tried to reveal the deep-seated ideologies which impinge upon the philosophical, cultural and value system in judging the role of women in Indian society. An effort has been made to strike a balance between the traditional family values and the western concepts like self-identity and self-actualization. According to P. Ramamoorthi, “Shashi Deshpande’s novels are concerned with a women’s quest for self; an exploration into the female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life and the protagonist’s place in it” (Ramamoorthi as qtd. in Dhawan, *Indian Women Novelists* 38). Ramamoorthi has studied the fiction of Deshpande as the fiction of a woman’s self-quest and is of the view that this theme continues in all her works as all her novels end with affirmation of the individuality of the protagonist. Siddhartha Sharma, in his book, *Shashi Deshpande’s*
Novels: A Feminist Study, seeks to study the feminist perspective in Shashi Deshpande’s novels. The study aims at evaluating Deshpande’s works as novels concerning primarily with women’s issues and gives a threadbare exposition of feminism in her novels. Mrinalini Sebastian, in her book, The Novels of Shashi Deshpande in Postcolonial Arguments, analyses some of the arguments of major postcolonial thinkers such as Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi. K. Bhabha, and presents the novels of Shashi Deshpande in a postcolonial framework.

Shashi Deshpande’s novels are women-centered and she definitely makes this feature of revealing the complexity of relationships through the perspective of women, her special strength. Being a woman, she knowingly or unknowingly reveals her natural concern towards the problems faced by women, the problems of contemporary urban women and their search for identity. To quote Manju Kapur’s words in this context, from her article “Female Factor,” “Being a woman, being whatever you are, informs your writing” (Kapur, Hindustan Times 2). Deshpande also feels like Manju Kapur that women are good at picking up subtle nuances and everything need not be literal for them. They pay attention to understated expressions and comprehend the problems of other women at an intuitive level. Therefore, Deshpande’s concern is mainly for the women and their problems, their struggle to achieve respect and identity in their relationships.

Most of the critics label Deshpande’s works as ‘feminist fiction’; but the author is surprisingly very vocal in objecting to this label. She says, “A woman who writes of women’s experiences often brings in some aspects of those experiences that have angered her, roused her strong feelings. I don’t see why this has to be labeled feminist fiction” (Pathak 230). Deshpande feels that her concern and exploration is more about women as human beings, independent of their roles as daughters, wives and mothers. She has dealt with issues like the struggles of the women to acquire an identity of their own along with harmony in relationships. However, she changes her stance clearly and admits to Lakshmi Holmstorm in an interview:

I now have no doubts at all in saying that I am a feminist. In my own life, I mean. But not consciously, as a novelist. I must also say that my feminism has come to me very slowly, very gradually, and mainly out of my own
thinking and experiences and feelings. I started writing first and only then discovered my feminism. And it was much later that I actually read books about it (Pathak 248).

Deshpande acknowledges the influence of feminists like Simone De Beauvoir, Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer as they helped her in getting certain perspectives clear in her mind but at the same time did not actually make her pick their theories and apply these in her novels because she read these writers quite late when she had already started writing. Therefore, she agrees that she is a feminist but disagrees that she is a feminist writer. She articulates her viewpoint clearly to Geetha Gangadharan in an interview, “Denying the Otherness”:

I am a feminist in the sense that, I think, we need to have a world which we should recognize as a place for all of us human beings. There is no superior and inferior, we are two halves of one species. I fully agree with Simone de Beauvoir that, that fact that we are human, is much more important than our being men and women. I think that’s my idea of feminism….My objection was to being called a feminist writer. Yes, I am very much against such a categorization. It is just good writing and, bad writing and not men’s and women’s writing (Pathak 254).

This statement profoundly makes it clear that Deshpande wants to be recognized and appreciated as a writer without any gender tag and vehemently opposes this categorization. She again makes her stance apparent in uncompromising mood, “When you deal with just my work, then take me as an individual writer and deal accordingly. Don’t call it women’s writing or feminist writing” (Pathak, 254). These remarks divulge that Shashi Deshpande does not oppose feminism but certainly feels restless at being labeled as a feminist writer. She attempts to deconstruct the various levels of patriarchy and sexist bias towards women in Indian middle-class society, particularly within the family set-up. She can be called a feminist in the sense that she is perceptive and aware of the dilemma faced by the woman in a predominantly patriarchal society but believes that for Indian women, probing and thinking for themselves, maintaining their identity by
living within their families and improving their relationships is the right kind of feminist approach. She explains the practical side of feminism to Lakshmi Holmstrom:

But to me feminism isn’t a matter of theory: it is difficult to apply Kate Millet or Simone de Beauvoir or whoever to the reality of our daily lives in India. And then there are such misconceptions about feminism by people here. They often think it is about burning bras and walking out on your husband, children, or about not being married, not having children, etc. I always try to make the point now about what feminism is not, and to say that we have to discover what it is in our lives, our experiences. And I actually feel that a lot of women in India are feminists without realizing it. I am surprised at how much our lives have changed in recent years. (Pathak 248-49).

The author has an acute perception of the human issues and avoids making her novels a propaganda by delivering messages of feminism. She has repeatedly tried to explain that she intends to write about human beings involved in different relationships and not just women in relation to men. She cautions her readers that she is neither a propagandist nor has intentions like having a sexist purpose in her writings and if the readers get this impression, it is a sheer coincidence. The author asserts in many of her interviews that her novels do not merely portray the realities of a female world, rather these dwell upon wider implications of human bonds, both familial and non-familial.

The theme of relationships has been dealt with by many Indian women writers in English. Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, just to name a few, have written their novels from their individual perspectives of relationships. They are recognized for their originality, versatility and the indigenous flavor of the soil with its richness and diversity of relationships. It is not the prerogative of this study to mention the approach and the perspective of the other Indian writers in English as Deshpande says in an interview, “Shashi Deshpande—in Conversation with T. Vijay Kumar,” “I would rather talk about my own fiction than what others are doing. It is very difficult to generalize. I always feel that it is wrong to generalize. I would not like to say that it is all hype or
substance. We will be missing something if we dismiss the whole thing as merely hype. I strongly feel that generalizations do a lot of harm” (Deshpande, museindia.com).

A critical inquiry into both personal and inter-personal relationships is an area which has remained largely neglected so far with respect to Shashi Deshpande’s fiction. Therefore this study aims at delving into this relatively unexplored aspect of her fiction, that is, the dynamics underlying the inter-personal relationships. Failure to maintain relationships is a very contemporary issue of concern. Looking around, one finds frustrations and negativities, people burning with anger at each other, children disrespecting their parents and couples throwing accusations at each other. Often, our hectic lifestyle becomes as much the cause as the effect. Today, people spend longer hours in their office, get easily bored with their partners, are stressed out, lack coping abilities, ignore family communication...the list is endless. People do not bond much with their families but the emotional bonding with someone outside their married life becomes more important. With bored housewives, sometime it becomes an obsession, so much so that there is an irresistible urge to hear, being with or chat with the other persons, despite potential repercussions. Most of the time, their emotional dependence can be a sign of underlying depression owing to their unsatisfactory interpersonal relationships in the familial context.

Deshpande believes in the ever-changing quality of relations and thinks that when other things change over a course of time, relations also become stale and consequently deteriorate, if not maintained painstakingly. All the novels chosen for the study delineate the matrix of familial and non-familial bonds with a striking sense of the immediate realities of life and are a slice of the real life problems one sees every day. Landscape changes, but the recurrence of theme of relationship surfaces and resurfaces in a variety of garbs in one novel after the other. One generally gets the impression that Deshpande’s fiction revolves primarily in the orbit of relationship between husband and wife and the urge of the wife to create a niche for herself though it is a complex web with beautiful designs and impressions on the emotional and psychological mind of the readers. The author is vocal with quite certainty about her fascination for this theme and tells Geetha Gangadharan, “We know a lot about the physical and the organic world and the universe
in general, but we still know very little about human relations. It is the most mystifying thing as far as I am concerned. I will continue to wonder about it, puzzle over it and write about it. And find it, tremendously, intriguing, fascinating" (Pathak 252-53).

When a writer like Shashi Deshpande frequently articulates her fetish for a particular theme of her fiction, she unconsciously reveals many intricacies of analysis to a critic; thereby making it very clear and simple for him to draw a mental map of her fiction as the writer has already done half the job of a critic. Her interviews exude how much she loves and values the nurturing of relationships. Her novels are all accounts of the relationships in middle-class families and the protagonists are all middle-age women. The author invariably portrays the psychological state of the protagonists who are caught up in an intricate web of various associations, playing roles as a daughter, wife and mother. But while performing these myriad roles, they are always negotiating their identities within their families and society, swinging back and forth from their societal relationships and relations with the self, usually trapped and frustrated to maintain a balanced equation between their relation with self and others.

Women writers have always expressed their bitterness at the writers being categorized as women writers and men writers, but the fact is that their main emphasis is always on the issues related to women. Shashi Deshpande has a different perspective on the same issue. Knowing it well enough that women issues are not something exclusively of women as society comprises male as well as female gender and both male and female are complementary to each other; she chooses a frame-work of familial-fringes which conditions and controls the evolution of the protagonists. Aditi De has made an assessment of Deshpande’s concerns, in an article, “Breaking that long silence”. She feels that Deshpande is bitter about the fact that when media talks about writers in English, her name is generally omitted, generalizing that a woman writer who writes about the domestic things and family is considered inferior. De, in her article, has quoted Deshpande expressing her anguish at critics calling women’s writing ‘the zenana’ by retaliating, “Should I, then, call men’s writing bedroom sahitya?” (Deshpande, “Breaking that long silence” The Hindu).
Interpersonal relationships between a man and a woman form the nucleus of Shashi Deshpande’s fiction but surprisingly enough, the male characters appear in a veil many a time and the author raises many questions about their absence in her own subtle manner. It is only through the eyes of the protagonists that we come to know about the male characters. In comparison with female characters which are ‘typical products of a feminine psyche’ (Deshpande as qtd. in Pathak, 237), the male characters seem to be thin and not rounded. Being a woman, she can empathize with woman’s problems in a better way and is well aware of the evolution of woman’s characters and the lack of evolution of men characters in her fiction. The author says, “Coming back to my own writing, I’m aware of this lack. I’ve not been able to put myself in the position of a man as well as I can enter a female consciousness, even when it is very different from mine” (Pathak 237).

Preoccupation to write about the typical middle class housewife and her relational problems; her desire to achieve some kind of identity, was not a deliberate choice or a planned effort on the part of Shashi Deshpande. She, instead, feels that it is the culture; traditions and the biology which make her women characters seek total sustenance from relationships. Therefore, these relations are not imposed upon women; rather these become a natural choice, a part and parcel of their emotional and psychological being. Often, they feel trapped and unhappy in the multiplicity of roles and long to have a little time and space for them to achieve some kind of self-actualization. But unlike the male characters, they generally do not have other avenues of fulfillment. Therefore, despite secretly wanting to carve their identity as a human being; playing their roles as a daughter or a wife or a mother becomes their prerogative. Deshpande gives a viable justification for creating such type of women characters, when she says:

May be not being a working woman, I’ve been able to feel more for a housewife, who is most devalued...women who do not get out to work, who are literally trapped, who are scared to get out of family relations. Without that, she feels she no claims whatever. Most women are still very emotionally dependent on the family - they want to be good daughters / wives / mothers always. A man wouldn’t think so much about it. And yet I
agree with you, now that I’m working, having a life outside the family is very important for women (Pathak 235).

A very valuable philosophy of Shashi Deshpande is exposed explicitly by her in statements often given in interviews to many scholars. It is the philosophy of a wonderful synergy between performance of familial roles along with maintenance of ‘self.’ In a very categorical tone, the author asserts that it is very important for women to grow on their own terms and not just bask in the glory of motherhood or of being an ideal wife. She advocates a delicate balance to be maintained between a relationship with ‘self’ and relationship with others. Self is vital for maintenance and sustenance of relationships with others and Deshpande feels that maintenance of ‘self’ is particularly vital for the women, as they generally tend to forget their needs while taking care of the needs of their husbands and children, consequently becoming frustrated and disturbed over the years. According to Deshpande:

It is necessary for women to live within relationships. But if the rules are rigidly that as a wife or mother you do this and no further, then one becomes unhappy. This is what I’ve tried to convey in my writing. What I don’t agree with is the idealization of motherhood— the false and sentimental notes that accompany it (Pathak 236).

Rigmaroles seem to fascinate Shashi Deshpande. One always finds a mish-mash of all sorts of relationships in her novels. There are grandmothers and grandfathers, fathers and daughters, uncles and aunts, husbands and wives and male friends as initiators of changes in the protagonists and so on. There is such an amazing variety of relationships that sometime one really needs to refer back to the introduction about Ai and Akka or Aji. Moreover, the author is not just prying into the social life of these characters but more into the thought process of these characters. This necessitates an approach to study her novels from a psychological perspective, from the perspective of a complex net-work of various factors leading to the birth of a particular perspective towards any kind of relationship.
It is the general opinion of psychologists and sociologists that positive relations thrive on three basic reasons: fulfillment of existence, avoidance of isolation voids and achievement of the growth of self. A positive and successful relationship strives to fulfill these three needs of an individual. Here, it will be pertinent to understand the various kinds of needs which all human beings have in general and also the order in which these needs are generally satisfied. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), an American psychologist, who is considered the father of Humanistic Psychology and mostly noted today for his proposal of a ‘Hierarchy of Human Needs’, wrote extensively on the basis of his lifelong research on the subject of a variety of human needs and the relevance of their fulfillment, for self-realization and self-actualization. Maslow has also borrowed ideas from other psychologists but added significantly to them, especially the concepts of a Hierarchy of Human Needs. His thinking was original in the sense that when most of the needs of an individual are gratified, there is acceleration in the growth, happiness and contentment of that individual, tying along with a positive attitude in life, which as a result reduces tension and frustration. Fulfillment of needs like a sense of belongingness and the need for acceptance by others is like an essential bonus, a person expects to earn from investment in every inter-personal relationship.
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs represented as a pyramid with more primitive needs at the bottom.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs model was developed somewhat between 1943 and 1954, and first widely published in Motivation and Personality in 1954. At that time the Hierarchy of Needs model comprised five levels. In Maslow’s most popular book Toward a Psychology of Being (1968), more layers of needs were added. However, the original 5 layer-version of need hierarchy can be best understood in the form of a pyramid which is given above, as Maslow also saw human needs arranged vertically like a ladder. These needs are arranged in an order of priority and the higher needs in the hierarchy are satisfied only when the lower ones are gratified. The first four layers of the pyramid; with the most basic needs at the bottom, what Maslow called “deficiency needs” must be fulfilled first. It is only when these needs are met, that an individual attempts to satisfy growth needs leading to personal development and fulfillment. Interestingly, human beings rarely bother to seek fulfillment from the physiological needs when they have moved to seek gratification from the fulfillment of psychological needs. They continue to enhance their psychological fulfillment even when there is a certain lack of achievement in the lower order needs. Another interesting assumption of this theory is that human beings rarely feel the need for realization of physiological needs so long as these are met without much effort in the normal routine but feel anxious when these physiological needs are not met for one reason or the other.

The first four layers of the pyramid called “deficiency needs” by Maslow are: Physiological needs, Safety needs, Need for love and belongingness and Esteem needs. Physiological needs are the most basic needs for survival like food, water, air, warmth, sex and other bodily needs of animals. If a person is hungry or thirsty or is deprived of sex and sleep, all of his energies turn toward remedying these deficiencies. It is only after the fulfillment of these animal needs that an individual can concentrate on the next needs in hierarchical order as when the lowermost needs remain unfulfilled, it creates obstacles in the satiation of higher order needs, making these needs remain inactive. Therefore, accomplishment of these basic biological needs, at least partially, is very crucial for stepping on the ladder. Maslow explains that, “Anyone who attempts to make an emergency picture into a typical one, and who will measure all of man’s goals and desires by his behavior during extreme physiological deprivation, is certainly blind to many things. It is quite true that man lives by bread alone-when there is no bread” (Maslow,
The characters in Deshpande's all novels, mainly the novels selected for this study belong to a middle class society and do not have any difficulty in fulfilling their physiological needs to sustain life. Therefore, they do not feel anxious or rather anything regarding their basic needs, and yearn for the fulfillment of other needs in the hierarchy.

The second type of needs in Maslow's pyramid is the Safety needs which encompass the need for security, protection, solidity and stability. After the satiation of physiological needs, human beings precede towards the fulfillment of need for safety, like security of employment, security of family life and health. Both the Physiological and the Safety needs are reasonably gratified in any middle class society; whereas the failure to satisfy these needs in the poor and disadvantaged sections of society leads to struggle for survival. The characters in the chosen novels of Deshpande are generally seen moving around in the orbit of family. Therefore, their needs for physical security and physical safety are reasonably met. For that reason, this study does not make much use of these needs as the characters further transcend to the third level of needs.

After the fulfillment of physiological and safety needs, the individual moves up towards the third level of needs in Maslow's hierarchy. These are social needs encompassing the need for friendship, care and concern, love and belongingness, sexual intimacy and a supportive and communicative family. Maslow hypothesizes that since all five types of needs are arranged vertically in a hierarchical order of potency; the basic physiological and the second level needs of safety are the most powerful for survival which is the basic animal instinct. Human beings, whose first two levels of needs are at least partially met, want emotional food in the form of love and belongingness. These needs are the most crucial and the foremost reason for building inter-personal relationships. Need to love and to be loved and accepted by the loved ones is the most important motivation in developing relations with an individual or a social group. This includes the need for family members and a supportive and understanding spouse, the need for friends and well-wishers. The study plans to examine the context of Deshpande's novels through the application of Maslow's theory of needs, assuming that it may prove useful in describing how and why the third level of needs or the social needs
of the main characters largely remain unfulfilled. Social needs are also realized by developing social connections with colleagues and confidants. No man can live and fulfill all his needs just in the family and as he grows up; he develops a variety of relationships with a variety of people in the society. Absence of caring and supportive family and encouraging and concerned social net-work outside the family make an individual susceptible to depression, negativities and loneliness. Love is a unique emotion which can make a person experience extreme happiness and ecstatic joy. Human beings need to feel a sense of belongingness and acceptance. They need to love and be loved (sexually and non-sexually) by others. Therefore, there is nothing shocking to see this need for love and belongingness surpassing the safety and physiological needs of some characters in Deshpande’s fiction. In the absence of these elements, many a time the main characters in the novels selected for the study become susceptible to loneliness, social anxiety and depression.

The fourth level of needs in Maslow’s model is the Esteem needs. Every human being seeks recognition and confirmation from other people and desires for achievement, strength and confidence. He has a longing to be respected by others, and needs reputation, prestige, status and dignity. In order to seek accomplishment of all these needs, man engages in various activities which give him confidence and a sense of acceptance, contribution, adequacy and eventually recognition. Individuals need a feeling of self-respect and self-esteem too. Healthy relations with family members and non-family members facilitate an individual’s process of earning self-esteem and self-worth whereas negation of such needs causes imbalances and bitterness in relationships as the individual feels frustrated, fearful or angry towards those who withhold respect to him. On the other hand psychological traumas or negative experiences in the past can also serve as barriers in the process of earning self-esteem, self-respect and respect from others. The protagonists in the chosen novels, as all humans in real life, have an enormous need to be respected, to have self-esteem and self-respect. Failure to meet their third level of needs, like the need for love and belongingness, leads to low self-esteem and self-respect. Consequently, instead of tapping their inner reservoirs of happiness and joy; they are always dependent on their counterparts and blame them for not giving them any pleasure in life. Deshpande’s perspective is that apart from performing their familial
responsibilities; women need to engage themselves in some other activities be it in a profession or a hobby, which can give them a sense of accomplishment. Imbalances at this level in Deshpande’s protagonists result in their low self-esteem and problems in interpersonal relationships, as they have difficulty in accepting themselves internally, consequently always seeking acceptance from others.

Lastly, there come the Self-actualization needs which are at the apex of the pyramid. These are the instinctual needs of humans related to personal growth and development by following one’s own passions and interests. Self-actualization, a concept which Maslow attributed to Kurt Goldstein, a mentor to Maslow—means making the most of one’s abilities and potentialities and strive to be the best one can. To quote Maslow, “What a man can be, he must be” (Maslow, The Maslow Business Reader 1). Maslow contended that an individual can reach the apex only after a reasonable satisfaction of the bottom needs like physiological needs, safety needs, need for belongingness and love and esteem needs. Maslow stresses upon the satiation of every individual’s need for self-expression, search for identity and meaning in life. When the lower needs of men are reasonably met, their creative juices flow and such persons become positive and energetic to make a useful contribution to society. Disappointment in meeting creative urges makes an individual restless and bored with a lack of zest for life. He feels all relationships and life in general a mundane affair. Maslow feels that self-actualized people perceive reality of themselves and of others in a very efficient way. They accept others and more importantly, they accept themselves as they are. Maslow also believes that some self-actualizing people have experiences of spirituality and transcendence which is a sublime experience. Very few people are able to experience transcendence, but those people who are able to fulfill their all needs enjoy physical, emotional and mental health by maintaining a balance between interdependence and independence. It is unfortunate that Deshpande’s protagonists fail to maintain this delicate balance throughout their lives. But it is fortunate that towards the end, they are able to strike this balance with self-realization. In fact Maslow believed that the two types of higher needs are very rarely satisfied in anyone. But once these are activated, the person views them as more important than the lower needs, as it somewhat happens in the case of Deshpande’s
protagonists. When the protagonists have self-realization, they gain confidence and courage to face their relational problems and override their lower needs.

Philosophical interpretation of Maslow’s theory could be similar to existentialism, which views life based more on personal experience rather than a psychological framework of human needs. Classification of needs is not always objective as it is the uniqueness, age, experience, expectations and choices of different individuals which makes it entirely subjective. Further, needs are always changing along with the other changes in life and the means to fulfill these needs also keep on changing through one’s life cycle. Cultural expectations and conformity further limit the extent to which an individual may achieve self-realization. For example, it would take a very strong minded woman to shake off the restraints of the family and achieve a sense of individuality as envisaged in the new woman of Deshpande’s new novels. The desire to confirm is a very limiting factor which defines self-actualisation in Indian context as the individuality to get some measure of happiness. Despite these possible contradictions, Maslow’s theory of needs is very positive in affirming the peculiar human needs fulfilled through interpersonal relationships; as it emphasizes personal or psychological growth by building and nurturing relationships rather than material gains. This theory is obviously about self; self-awareness and understanding self and the others.

Maslow’s Need Hierarchy is used in this study only as a general proposition and does not imply that all the relationship needs of the main characters in the selected fiction of Deshpande follow the same rigid pattern. For some characters, like the protagonist of Moving On, the need for sex as a crude biological need is more important than the need for reputation and esteem. Therefore, this study, in the following chapters will rely mainly on the selected fiction of Deshpande as the primary sources and Maslow’s theory will be used only as a useful guide for understanding, explaining and analyzing the subtleties of the thought process of the individuals involved in interpersonal relationships.

Since this study dwells mainly on the inner landscape of the characters, the intricate details of what goes on in the mind of the main characters and their emotional upheavals while passing through different phases of interpersonal relationships; it becomes crucial to describe and analyze a few dynamics underlying inter-personal
relationships. There seems a "linked analogy" between relationships and these dynamics and this analogy can help us to understand several ambiguous reasons for the failure in relationships in the fiction selected for the study. Relational dynamics typically do not operate alone, rather their interaction with one another affects an individual's behavior with others. These dynamics can provide many meaningful clues towards solving relational problems. Obviously, some knowledge of these is necessary to understand several possible reasons for a man's positive or negative relationships with others; thereby providing tools for reading the novels of the chosen author. Since all human beings are interactive parts of the social network and not observers from the outside; it is obvious to understand their keenness to maintain satisfactory relations and desire to develop an acute perception and understanding of the various dynamics actively affecting personal associations.

The first and the foremost dynamic is the environment during the childhood years. Richard Dewey and W. J. Humber - the famous American Psychologists, in their book *The Development of Human Behaviour* elaborate upon the definition and the need for proper environment in an individual's life. The authors say, "Human nature is not developed in a vacuum. It is shaped through the interaction which takes place between the human organism and other aspects of the world stage upon which the human drama unfolds. This stage is called environment" (94). Dewey and Humber feel that the stable environment during infancy and early childhood is generally a precursor to the healthy relationships in adulthood. The environment around us constantly creates our self-concepts and builds our personality. Positive forces during these formative years have positive physical, emotional and psychological implications in adulthood which consequently help in paving an easy path to the refinement of relationships with others.

Fulfillment of basic needs like food, sleep and shelter and secondary needs like love and affection of the parents makes a child grow into a healthy, happy and secure individual who is capable of developing positive attitude towards others. Deprived childhood, many a time, makes him a bundle of intangible insecurities, whereas an environment vibrating with positive values like affection and encouragement fosters the development of self-esteem and foundation of healthy relationships in the adult life.
Traumatic experiences during childhood may cause traumatic effect and irreparable scars on human psyche. Traumatic experiences may range from violence, physical or mental torture inflicted on a child to death of a close-one. Failure to imbibe vital values due to inadequate parenting style may cause inadequacy in establishing successful relationships at every stage of life. Rejection or hurt or negative treatment like nagging, criticism and sarcasms may inculcate maladaptive responses and relational problems. Repeated negative reinforcement by the parents results in lowering the self-esteem of a child which affects his self-perception throughout the life. In fact, an individual’s beliefs, attitudes and values are created in the cradle of family hood in the childhood. Deshpande’s protagonists often do not enjoy a warm and secure relationship with their mothers in the childhood and these negative relationships are one of the most important reasons leading to insecurity and failure in their other relationships in the future.

The lack of effective inter-personal communication is another important factor which has a great deal to do with effective inter-personal relations in Deshpande’s fiction. It is a very glaring problem in Deshpande’s fiction, interrupting the flow of relational energies and will be explored in detail in the coming chapters. It is a well-established fact that when communication needs are thwarted, the process results in frustration, anger or anxiety. Exchange of feelings and emotions is one of the fundamental needs of every human being and failure to establish this exchange results in personality disorders. Communication satisfies most of our relational needs particularly our identity needs. Human beings derive their sense of identity from the way they interact with others and from the way others feel about them. In fact, it is the only way to learn about self. Communication is a sort of mirror, as through interacting with others and knowing the reactions of others, an individual sees and frames an image of his own self. Deprivation of this crucial need makes an individual grow with zero identity and as he grows up he has negative sensory perceptions of how others view or define him. Communication signals received by a child are the most important for the development of his self and personality, but the value of these signals cannot be denied at any stage of life. Many psychological studies have proved that the individuals are attracted to those people who fulfill their identity needs and who give them a better definition. Children, whose social needs of love, acceptance and belongingness are nourished adequately, generally develop
a better self-image of them and grow up as adults who are open to communication, self-
respecting and maintain supportive relationships. It can work the other way too, as an
individual who is successful at maintaining good inter-personal relationships generally
has high self-esteem and can be a successful communicator. Adler and Rodman confirm
this proposition:

People with relatively high self-esteem seek out others who confirm their
value and, as much as possible, avoid those who treat them poorly. Conversely, who regard themselves as unworthy may look for
relationships in which others treat them poorly. This principle offers one
explanation for why some people maintain damaging or unsuccessful
relationships. If you view yourself as a loser, you may associate with
others who will confirm that self-perception. Of course relationships can
transform and feel one’s identity as well as confirm it. Supportive
relationships can transform feelings of inadequacy into self-respect, and
damaging ones can lower self-esteem (Adler and Rodman, Understanding
Human Communication 9).

Apart from enabling us to learn who we are and shaping our identity,
communication is a tool for establishing vital links with others. A man needs to satisfy
his relational needs by communicating his feelings of pleasure, sadness, loneliness,
affection, relaxation and control. His inability to meet all such needs, make him frustrated
and see his life as empty and meaningless. These needs can only be met when
communicated to others. Therefore communication and relating are the two basic goals of
a man’s existence and are two ways of looking at the same perspective. People who are
adept at effective communication are also more skilful at relating with others happily and
successfully. Psychologist Kenneth Gergen captures the relational nature of
communication by verbalizing the relation between success in life and interaction with
others, “One cannot be ‘attractive’ without others willing to follow or a ‘loving person’
without others to affirm with appreciation” (Kenneth as qtd. in Adler and Rodman 16).
Therefore, communication is a two-way affair, which dramatically influences the
relationship between two people.
There is no exaggeration in elaborating the value of communication in all sorts of relations, to the extent of saying that all major or minor problems are due to miscommunication. Miscommunication can occur when the speaker is unable to put his feelings or message across effectively in exact or specific words, thereby giving wrong signals to the hearer. Miscommunication can also happen, when despite speaker’s best efforts to explain something, the listener is able to perceive the context from a particular wrong side; thereby failing to understand the speaker’s viewpoint and frequently misunderstanding each other. According to Adler and Rodman:

In truth, communication is neither good nor bad in itself. Rather, its value comes from the way it is used. In this sense, communication is similar to fire: flames in the fireplace on a cold night keep you warm and create a cozy atmosphere, but the same flames can kill if they spread into the room. Communication can be a tool for expressing warm feelings and useful facts, but under different circumstances the same words and actions can cause both physical and emotional pain (24).

This statement throws light on a new dimension of relationships that communication cannot solve every relational problem in every context. There is no doubt that if individuals could just express themselves better, their inter-personal relationships would improve. But at the same time, communication is not a panacea for all misunderstandings in relationships. Adler and Rodman clarify the point by saying, “Although it’s certainly true that not communicating enough is a mistake, there are also situations when too much communication is a mistake. Sometimes excessive communication simply is unproductive, as when we ‘talk a problem to death’, going over the same ground again and again without making any headway” (26). Therefore, it becomes very overt that miscommunication or even communication when stretched too far reaps negative results. There are times when silence is the best course. All communication is to some extent purposeful and whenever there is any verbalization, there are to some extent certain reasons behind it. Joseph A. Devito, in his book Communicology: An Introduction to the Study Of Communication makes this point clear very succinctly. He says, “Words of
course, communicate and there are reasons why the words used are used. But silence also communicates and there are reasons why silence is used” (159).

Different connotations of silence revealing how silence influences relationships in a positive or negative way; make interesting explorations. One connotation of silence as Devito has explained above is that silence is a wonderful means of communication at times. Silence does not mean being unable to articulate or say something for the reason that there are times when silence is preferred than uttering foolish words. Again, a person may not be able to articulate his feelings or emotions; but his silence speaks volumes about him or about the other person involved in relationships. Non-verbal behavior like the gross movements of gesturing or the seemingly insignificant movements of hands, eyes, facial expressions are loaded with significance though contextual in meaning like verbal-communication. One noteworthy observation regarding non-verbal behavior is that though it is not easy to fake such behavior; it is very easy to perceive such actions without much mindful attentiveness. Therefore even when an individual is silent; his bodily cues explicitly demonstrate his fondness or dislike for the other person involved in relationships.

Silence is sometime used for defensive purposes too, voluble silence being symbolic of the rejection of other person’s authority. In order to maintain a working relationship, human beings have an innate instinct to remain silent in the presence of a person of authority or aggressiveness. The art of preferring silence in place of communication is practiced for one’s own defense when a person wants to avoid confrontation, unpleasant debate or sourness in relationships. Similarly silence can be interpreted as purposeful in ignoring the other person’s presence or viewpoint. In negative human relations, silence is used as a weapon to undermine the confidence of the other person. Silence, as seen in the coming chapters is an intriguing and mystifying dynamic with profound implications in relationships as depicted by Deshpande.

Positive relations thrive in a climate of sacrifice and love. These two dynamics involve to a major extent protection of ‘I” and fortification of ‘we’ feelings, but certainly without any bitter or hard feelings at the same time. The religious and spiritual writer
Jaggi Vasudev, who is also a yogi and a mystic and is commonly known by the name Sadguru, clarifies many wrong notions of love:

Love essentially means somebody else has become far more important than you. That may be distressing, for your existence is threatened. You will lose all your freedom and everything that you have. The moment you say “I love you” you can no more do what you want in your life. There are innumerable problems but at the same time it’s pleasant. It’s sweet. It drags you in. It is self-annihilating. If you do not annihilate yourself, you will never know love. Some part of you must die. If you don’t let this happen, there is no love, only calculation (Sadguru, “Self-Annihilating Love Destroys and Liberates” The Times of India).

Sadguru, places value in virtues like sacrifice, love and self-annihilation in forming a variety of relationships in our life; but he does not use the term self-annihilation in a negative sense. He elaborates upon the concept by saying that all associations involve an expression of love as it is ‘a mutual benefit scheme’ which is full of sweetness. By annihilating some of our likes and dislikes, one surrenders before the person whom he loves. It is surrender with satisfaction of doing something for the person one loves, being valuable to him, thinking more of him than of own self. The absence of virtues like sacrifice and true love works as impediment in the establishment of smooth relationships will be explored in each novel individually in the forthcoming chapters.

Knowledge of the ‘self’ or self-awareness which comprises control of one’s thoughts, feelings and behavior to understand one self is a very powerful dynamic behind any successful inter-personal relationship. Self-awareness enables a person to disclose one’s feelings and gain a better understanding of one self. Self-disclosure enables a person to gain insight not necessarily from the other person; but by gaining self-awareness of one’s behavior through the process of self-disclosure. Disclosing or sharing our joys and sorrows, pouring out our mind, is an essential condition for developing meaningful relationships. Joseph A.Devito highlights the need for self-disclosure in development and maintenance of flourishing relationships:
Perhaps the main reason why self-disclosure is important is that it is necessary if a meaningful relationship is to be established between two people. Without self-disclosure, meaningful relationships seem impossible to develop. There are it is true, relationships that have lasted for ten, twenty, thirty and forty years without self-disclosure.... Without self-disclosure, however, these relationships are probably not terribly meaningful or at least they are not as meaningful as they might be. By self-disclosing we are in effect saying to other individuals that we trust them, that we respect them, that we care enough about them and about our relationship, to reveal ourselves to them, this leads the other individual to self-disclosure in return. This is at least the start of a meaningful relationship, a relationship that is honest and open and one that goes beyond the surface trivialities (67).

This is the beauty of relationships, that these meet two people's social and emotional requirements by mutually respecting and demonstrating the mutual respect through listening to each other with respect and care. Consequently, interacting or relating with one another, involves not only exchange of information but also to react emotionally, thereby valuing others and in the process seeing them as valued.

Gender difference is another powerful dynamic of inter-personal bonding which is exhibited in the different approach of men and women towards dealing with others. Women are more often entrusted the responsibility of maintaining relational harmony because of their assumingly higher emotional quotient, the reasons for that being located in the biological and cultural differences between both the sexes. There is hardly anything one can do regarding biological differences, but cultural differences make an interesting study. In Indian culture, women are generally expected to be tolerant, submissive, loving, caring, compromising and nurturing relationships whereas men are supposed to be dominant, strong and more worldly-wise to get their way. Cultural differences play on human psychology and men are more likely to withdraw from a relationship when they sense failure to get their way. Women, by contrast, cope with their stress by talking with others and maintaining loving bonds, “Just as a man is fulfilled through working out the
intricate details of solving a problem, a woman is fulfilled through talking about the
details of her problems" (Gray, Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus 39). Men’s
practical nature and women’s intuitive nature in general does not mean that men are not
cut for relationships and it is only women’s domain. Instead, it can be taken like this that
the stereotypical male notion of expectations is not similar to the stereotypical female
notion in every context.

Four novels of Shashi Deshpande – The Dark Holds No Terrors, Roots and
Shadows, That Long Silence, and Moving On have been chosen for this study from the
point of view of chronological order and thematic parallels. The first three novels are the
old ones whereas Moving On published in 2004 is in comparison a new novel of
Deshpande. The objective of this selection was to discover some sort of parallelism as
well as differences in the author’s new works and the old ones in terms of thematic and
technical aspects including the narrative technique and structural details. The selection
reflects the author’s maturity and a gradual change in perspective towards the chosen
theme, which is true to contemporary society. All these novels revolve around
relationships within the family as well as outside the family and reveal the author’s great
reverence and regard for family values and bonding. The present study focuses mainly on
the psychological underpinnings of the main characters in the selected texts. This entails
an understanding of human nature as it gets articulated in and around marital, familial
and non-familial bonds. Journey of the self, which runs as the sub-text of these narratives,
also comes under a scrutiny. The observation from which this study starts is that people
act with reference to each other and every individual is the epicenter of interactions.
Therefore it is proposed to analyze the web of various kinds of relationships in
Deshpande’s selected fiction and the role of these bonds in producing insight and a
realistic perspective of the ‘self’. An effort will be made to probe into the role of
emotional bonding in the lives of main characters in the chosen fiction, its vivifying,
dampening or crippling effects, and how these healthy or un-healthy relationships lead to
corresponding emotions, thoughts and motives, consequently triggering changes in the
dynamics of such relations. The study deals with the constant juxtaposing of husband-
wife relationship with familial and non-familial bonds. The basic premise on which this
analysis of Shashi Deshpande’s selected fiction is built is the interdependence of self-
validation, personal identity and inter-personal relationships. There is an endeavor to value primary sources more than the secondary ones. Reflecting the fact that relations are conceived and nourished with emotive values; the study primarily focuses on understanding the mind-sets of the characters. At the same time, it is also contended that predispositions are translated into reality with variable intensity depending on the cultural context. Therefore, an eclectic approach will be used to analyze the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande using mainly Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the various dynamics discussed in this chapter and also the cultural context in general. The crux of the research is on how far the novelist succeeds in depicting the ‘self-growth’ of the characters vis-à-vis their family and society.

The present work proposes to explore the chosen theme of “Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships in the Selected Fiction of Deshpande”; predominantly focusing on its exploration in the context of familial relationships. The chosen novels focus largely on interpersonal relationships in the familial set-up, and the interest of the study is to examine many layers of ‘self’ wrapped up in a realistic framework of family with its multitude of forces conducive to the growth of the individual. Since family is a place where the foundation of relationships is laid, and a place where an individual learns the first lessons in love, belongingness, hostility, estrangement and even rejection; the study mainly limits itself to the bonds nurtured in the family.

The division of chapters is based on the chronological order of the chosen novels. Chapter II analyses Deshpande’s first published novel The Dark Holds No Terrors, with a focus on marital relationships and mother-daughter relationship. Chapter III examines Roots and Shadows from the relational perspective, by bringing out the various nuances of marital and familial relationships in an extended family. This novel, though written first by Deshpande was published later. Therefore, it becomes the second in chronology. Chapter IV analyses That Long Silence which primarily focuses on marital relationships. Since it is important to see the author’s perspective in the old as well as the new fiction; therefore Chapter V ventures further into multiple relationships of the protagonist and Deshpande’s somewhat different approach and point of view towards relationships in Moving On, which is relatively a new novel of Deshpande. Relations cannot be
categorized into water-tight compartments and every relation overlaps and intrudes into the boundaries of other type of relations. Therefore it is not exactly possible to study husband-wife relationship or familial relationships or non-familial relationships in isolation. Hence, each novel is a net-work of all sorts of relationships. Chapter VI summarizes the main arguments of the analysis done in the above chapters. This leads to an estimate of Deshpande’s treatment and articulation of the chosen theme; thereby making a final assessment of her fictional world and her concern towards balancing relationships.