## CHAPTER - 1

### INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Concept of ‘Feminism’ in Western & Indian Perspective

1.1.1.1. Definition of ‘Feminism’

Literature reflects the various colours of human life. The innate and the foremost intuitive foundation of all literature lie in the intrinsic human passion to communicate the theatre of human experience into stream of human life. Despite the inconsistencies of culture, tradition, colour, creed, belief, taboos --- literature is written by male-female writers which reflects the hidden inner most journey of self, stands out as an intense, trailblazing experience of human living, as an endless river pouring in to an unbound ocean of the most voiced vibrancies. Feminism in Indian literature, as can be most commonly conceived, is a much subtly handled under restricted circumstances. The concept of women did not confine itself to socio-political sphere but it found its articulation in the creative arts, especially in Literature (Swami 7). Literature is the reflection of the society which couldn’t be remained unaffected without exploring the ‘Women’s questions’. In ‘Feministic’ literature women’s questions and the reflection of the inner world are in the centralized state.

The word ‘Feminism’ depicts the awareness of the women towards their identity and the problems of the women related to ‘Feminity’ which have been painted by the colours of their own hidden emotions and realizations. Women subjugation is the central fact of the history and also it is the root of all social disturbances in the society (qtd. In Concept of Feminism). According to Janet Richards: “The essence of Feminism has a strong fundamental case intended to mean only that there are excellent reasons for thinking that woman suffer from systematic social injustice because of their sex, the proposition is to be regarded as constituting feminism” (3).

Feminism can also be defined as a global phenomenon which addresses some the specific issues related to women across the world in a specific manner as applicable to particular culture or society. Though the issues related to feminism may differ for different societies and culture but they are broadly tied together with the underlying philosophy of achieving equality of gender in every sphere of life (qtd. In Sanjay Kali’s
The most straightforward definition of ‘Feminism’ is that it is a movement for social, cultural, political and economic equality of men and women (qtd. In Sanjay Kali’s Definition of Feminism). In 1979, Barbara Smith had given the definition of the “Feminist” and “Feminism” is that: “The reason racism is a feminist issue, is easily explained by the inherent definition of feminism. Feminism is the political theory and practice to free all women: women of color, working-class women, poor women, physically challenged women, lesbian, old women-as well as white economical privileged heterosexual women. Anything less than this is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement” (qtd. In No Turning Back). It’s a campaign against gender inequalities and it strives for equal rights for women (qtd. In Sanjay Kali’s Definition of Feminism). Feminism, in other sense the right of the choice of living independently, thinking liberally and living by choice of own life which is non-discriminatory and which works within the principles of social, cultural, political, economic equality and independence. Feminism is that broad term which cannot be tied to any narrow definition based on a particular class, race or religion (qtd. In Sanjay Kali’s Definition of Feminism).

According to Jessi Ristau: “Feminism is RESPECT” It’s a fight of woman to get the respect in the family, in the society, in the personal relationships, in the social relationship and in the working field too. The famous Historian and the activists Cheris Kramarae, author of A Feminist Dictionary, 1996, said that: “Feminism is the radical notion that women are human being” (qtd. In Kramarae). Feminism is highly related to the demand of the rights of being a human being. To be counted equally. According to Carleton College WGST: “Feminism is a movement for social justice and human rights” (qtd. In Carleton College WGST). Also the other definition depicts the strong thought that: “Feminism is a movement for social justice with an emphasis on gender” (qtd. In Urban dictionary). Feminism is a movement to end sexist oppression as well as dominant relations. This does not only aim to make women equal to men, but all people to each other in rights. It is one gear in the biggest machine of human rights (qtd. In Urban dictionary).

According to, Merriam Webster dictionary: “Feminism is the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes” (qtd. In Urban dictionary).
Defining “Feminism” is not only difficult but also challenging at the same time. It is not just the issue of discussion but also expression through the bold and the bare writing. It’s a broad topic of acting, writing, speaking, discussing, expressing, and advocating by the women, on behalf of the women, for the women and of the women regarding the issues, rights, struggles, suffering, traumas, female subjugation in the society and personal internal dilemmas (Dewani 5).

Feminism is a movement to promote equality and fight against oppression. That it does so at the expense of male patriarchy, not feminism. So it has been cleared by the definition that: “Feminism allows you to look at the world in a new light.” (qtd. In Urban dictionary). It is in fact a global struggle for gender equality and end of the gender based discrimination against women. So White American Women, Black American, Asian Women, Latin American Women, European Women or Women from any other part of the world are united in their struggle against gender based discrimination and inequality (qtd. In Feminism Information : Definition of Feminism).

Feminism is also related to men in the sense that all gender based equality is in fact a balance between the male and female with the intension of liberating the individual. In that sense the definition of feminism also includes all movements and campaigns that target men and boys for gender sensitization with a goal to end gender based discriminations and achieve gender based equality. Besides, the rise of womanhood is closely attached with awakening the feminine in all of us. Awakening of feminism is nothing but awareness in one’s own self (qtd. In Sajjay Kali’s Definition of Feminism). According to Adrienne Rich: Feminism is “Re-vision- the act of looking back, of Seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction- is for women more than a chapter in culture history: it is an act of survival” (qtd. In Adrienne Rich).

Mary Wollstonecraft is called as the pioneer of the first major feminist manifesto A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792) also called as the ‘The Feminist’ and the ‘Mother of Feminism’ who is very much famous for the work A Vindication of the Rights of Women which was published in 1792 regarding the history of feminism. Her works are considered totally different and deep in colours with the approach of women’s education and the rights of women’s life. She is usually associated with the addressing of “a liberal
feminist” because her primary focus was on the individuality of the women and their rights. Mary Wollstonecraft is the first feminist in the honouring of women’s natural talents and her insistence that women can’t be measured by men’s standard (Lewis). Mary Wollstonecraft, who demanded the equal opportunities for women in the field of education, economic and politics. She attacked on social and economical systems. *A Vindication*, strongly pleaded for women’s education and their protection by laws (Wollstonecraft).

Her work *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* focused on the historicist perspective on female education and the Universalist approach to social theory. Her demand is that men should grant women, the possibilities to prove themselves as an individual blessed with the qualities of reason and independent thoughts. She viewed that: “*It is time to effect a revolution of female manners—time to restore them their lost dignity—make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world*” (Wollstonecraft). Mary Wollstonecraft has focused on the dominant ideology formatted by the patriarchal society, what she uncovered was the systematic inequality of the women in almost all the field start from the personal to social, work, culture, economics, the law, education etc. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* was the response of that inequality. She too noticed the women’s naturalness and their natural support to such ideologies and the system of life which has to offer them as she finds the word ‘natural’ is highly ideologically loaded word. She viewed that: “*Women, in particular, are rendered weak and wretched, by a variety of concurring causes.*” amongst which are inadequate parenting, bad education, lack of property rights and exclusion from the political sphere, as well as the negative effects of the literary-cultural traditions, the ideology of romantic love which makes the women more sentiment, and bad novels which reproduce a false picture of reality rather than an intelligent analysis of it (Wollstonecraft).

Feminism enlightened the existence of women as human being who should be counted in the family, society and in the working field. Feminism is the trend of changing the face of the traditional women in to the woman with acceptance of the time span concerned. Feminism doesn’t mean the opposition of the male in every manner nor anti-male movement but it’s a fight against non-acceptance of the women as human being.
The view of A. Eron focuses that: “Feminism: the right to vote, work, study, own property, have freedom of movement, be free of sexual harassment—for ALL adults” (Urban English Dictionary).

Women have demanded for their rights to consider themselves as human beings who exist and need healthy growth. Feminism is not merely a movement but it is the voice for political right, social stability, economical independence, working freedom, liberation of expression, demand of equal rights, self-establishment in family as well as in the society. The theory of Feminine Aesthetics gives a new dimension to the understanding of female psyche. It focuses that: “For the Indian woman, the home had been the entire world for many centuries” (qtd. In Feminine Aesthetics).

For the better development of women, Virginia Woolf considers strong economical freedom, financial liberation and privacy of place, prior in demand for the better literary and career oriented development. She thought that: “A woman must have money and room of her own if she is to write fiction”. Financial liberation is the biggest supportive liberation for women to be independent and thinking and being decisional in any situation. Women of the Pre-Vedic time very often enjoyed the same aspects of liberation so that the best kinds of the literary contribution came over the surface of the society (qtd. In Feminism in the Indian Context).

Chaman Nahal viewed about Feminism is that: “I define feminism as a mode of existence in which the woman is free of the dependence syndrome. There is dependence syndrome whether it is husband, father, the community or a religious group. When women will free themselves of the dependence syndrome and lead a normal life, my idea of feminism materializes.” Chaman Nahal considers the independency from all sides is the root of the woman’s strength (qtd. In Feminism in Indian Context).

Feminism is the battle for equality, the equal rights and the consideration between male and female. Feminism is the struggle against the sexual oppression, subjugation, exploitation in the name of social and the religious norms, dominated under the patriarchy. Feminism is the movement which is considered as the necessary resistance to the patriarchal power, stagnant conservative male approach towards women’s abilities and the capacities. According to Eisenstein, the term of feminism and the feminist is: “In
my understanding of the term ‘feminist’ then I see an element of visionary futurist thoughts. This encompasses a concept of social transformation that as part of the eventual liberation of women with change all man relationships for the better. Although, centrally about women, their experience and condition. Feminist is also fundamentally about men and about social change” (qtd. In Feminism In The Indian Context: An Introduction).

According to Shashi Deshpande regarding the feminist movement: “If others see something feminist in my writing, I must say that it is not consciously done, it is because the world for women is like that and I am mirroring the world” (qtd. In Indian Women Writers: An Overview). She observes that there are several selves to an individual and that a woman finds it difficult to extricate her consciousness from the ‘unseen presence of males’ (qtd. In Roots and Shadows : A Feminine Study). ‘Feminism’ and ‘Feminine Aesthetic’ are the term related to the struggle for ‘Self’, the self which doesn’t deal with the person as an individual counting alone but it includes the complicated consciousness, awakening of the women as ‘Self’. Women’s struggle is of search for ‘selfhood’. According to Ferdinand-the-Bull: “Feminism is a benevolent force that aids in providing the best opportunities for all members of society, and anyone who believes otherwise is paranoid, reactionary fuckwit” (7). In concern of the physical difference if something can be enlightened is that though women have delicate posture and physic, they take much working burden along with the household works and the earning, such as poor class, labour class women. In certain sense it can be noted that women accept the much more and various responsibilities together such as of housekeeping, looking after of children, earning bread and help to male in maintaining the expense of the household affairs, serving in-laws, keeping regularities in working fields etc.

According to Robin Morgan, the co-founder of the Women’s Media Centre: “I call it feminism- plural”, “To young women in the global North, eating disorders are a major problems, but to women in the global south, eating disorder means not having enough rice in your bowl. So Feminism doesn’t have a narrow definition; it’s when anything fights for women’s right” (qtd. In Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf? What It Means to be A Feminist Today?). Feminism is not a soft voice but it’s a strong approach of demand of the women towards those who don’t understand or don’t accept women as equal but give
them secondary status, as helping servant only. Voice of feminism demands the better male-female relationship in the family, society, and in the working field.

1.1.1.2. Perspective on ‘Feminism’

History of Feminism depicts the chronological phenomenal account of the movement of Feminism. It throws light on certain ideologies like defining of feminism, establishing the status of women, their position, their status in society, in politics and their social, political, economical rights. The term ‘Feminism’ can be generally divided into three ‘waves’ in the United States, each with slightly different in colours and shades of progress and impact.

- The First wave of Feminism was the period of the movement during 19th century to early 20th century, especially in Europe and the Anglo sphere; means 1800’s - 1920’s, which focused on the suffrage of women, right to be educated, better working conditions and double sexual standard, also it enlightens the promotion of equal contract, economics and employment, sexualities and families, marriage, suffrage, parenting and property, war, peace and a constitutional amendment for equality, rights for women in UK and US. By the end of the 19th century the movement focused on the political power for women and fight for the women’s sexual, reproductive, and economic rights too (Dewani 4). In 1923 Hoda Shaarawai founded the Egyptian Feminist Union and became the president and a symbol of the Arab women’s movement. On 21st April 1944, women in France got only the provisional Government of the French Republic. The consultative Assembly of Algiers of 1944 proposed on 24th March 1944 to grant eligibility to women but following an amendment by Fernand Grenier, they were given full citizenship, including the right to vote. In May 1947, following the November 1946 elections, the sociologist Robert Verdier minimized the ‘gender gap’, stating in Le Populaire that women had not voted in a consistent way, dividing themselves, as men, according to social classes (qtd. In Postmodern Feminism).

- The Second wave got frame in the early 1960, means 1950’s to 1980’s and continues till present, co-exists with third – wave feminism. The second wave is largely and deeply related with the issues of equality such as ending discrimination other than suffrage which was the burning issue of the first weave. The second wave feminists see
women’s cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked and encourage women to understand aspects of their personal lives as deeply politicized and as reflecting Sexist power structures (Dewani 4).

- The Third wave is the period between 1990’s to 2000’s reflects the huge diversity in the feminist activity as the response to what young women thought of as perceived failures of the second- wave. The upper middle class white women came in to the ground of the fighting for their rights. The third weave largely and deeply focused on “micro politics” and challenged the second weave’s paradigm as to what is, or is not, good for females (qtd. In History of Feminism).

The term ‘Feminist’ and ‘Feminism’ first appeared in France and the Netherlands in 1872 (as less feminists) then in 1890 in Great Britain, then in 1904 in United States. In 1894 The Oxford Dictionary lists for the appearance of ‘Feminists’ and 1895 for ‘Feminism’ (Dewani 4).

A feminine perspective requires the deep concentration to understand the contribution of the male –female in the movement of the feminism to grow the women from their stagnant stage circle. Western critics have categorized the term of feminism into various feministic approach like Liberal Feminism, Marxist Feminism, Socialistic Feminism, Radical Feminism, Psycho analytical Feminism, Existential Feminism and Post-modern Feminism. There are also other categories in the western feminism, individual feminism, relative feminism, cultural feminism and lesbian separatism. As per the time span changes the term of feminism came with the different colours. Some democratic feministic writers added the colours of their views which made the movement strongest in America and England like Mary Wollstonecraft, Margaret Fuller, Russian Feminist like Alexandra Kollontai, American socialists Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Zilla Eisenstien. The Black women’s fight for the freedom became under the feministic ideology the movement of ‘Womanism’ which dealt with the specific problems of the black women (Nirmala 1).
1.1.1.3 Rise of ‘Feminism’ in India

History of the Indian Feminism in English Writing is divided into three phases such as the beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, initiated when male European colonists began to speak out against the social evils like Sati. The second phase is from 1915 to Indian Independence when Gandhi incorporated the Indian women’s participation in the Indian freedom movement in to Quit India movement, and Independent women’s organizations began to emerge. Finally, the third phase, post-independence, when the force was on the right of women to take part equally with the fair chance in the political field (Behtash & Sajjadi 107-117).

Before the active Nationalistic Movement, in India, many women struggled against British rule and Indian freedom, such as in 1817, Bhima Bai Holkar, who fought bravely against the British colonel Malcom and defeated him in guerilla warfare. In 1924 Rani Channama of Kittur resisted her arms against the East India Company. Later, Rani Lakhsmi Bai of Jhasi to save Jhansi from the hands of Britishers. During the First World War of Independence (1857-58) she declared the fight against the Britishers to save Lucknow, the most part of Awadh. She fought bravely and got back Awadh, she declared her son Birjis Qadra as the king of Awadh. Annie Besant an Irish Lady, the leader of Theosophical Society, in 1914 joined the Indian National Congress, presented the idea of the Home Rule League first and on 18th December, 1917, along with Tilak presented the Memorial of Montague, which gave the women equal right to political franchise. She gave powerful lead to women’s movement in India and became the first woman president of congress (qtd. In Female Indian Freedom Fighters).

Sarojini Naidu’s activist writing reflects the honest and the heartfelt condition of the country. In the mid-nineteenth century Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain created the world of the feminist ideologies. In Sultana’s Dream she reflected the world dominated by women; a world which has imprisoned men in a male equivalent of Zenanas (Women’s quarters). She focuses on the world where the constant flow of love, care and equality emerges. In 20th century the literary move took turn towards the modernism in which womanist and feminist statements were combined with political messages. Women writers such as Mahashweta Devi created a world of tribal rebel in Draupadi, whose fight
was against of political system to enforce capitalism which has driven them to become Naxalites (Koshy). Besides, Shashi Deshpande built the platform of universal female experiences. In Binding Vine, She reflects the experience of women coming from different echelons of the society. The women writers’ works were taken under least valuable works due to patriarchal assumptions about the superior worth of male experience. The reason of this ignorance in contribution is lake of expression of the origin of self. The women were kept subsidiary and treated as secondary and inferior or lest competent in every sense so that the literature based on the women’s contribution related to their life, experiences etc. was kept far away from the touch of expression and was suppressed. Regarding this Chaman Nahal viewed that: “Both the awareness of women’s position in society as one of disadvantage or in generality compared with that of man and also desire to remove those is advantages” (qtd. In Indian Writer’s overview). Women writers’ works were often based on psychological suffering which was not considered as healthy literature for the society and that’s why it was ignored by the male dominated society. But now Indian writing has declared the herald of a new era and has earned many laurels both at home and abroad. Indian Women Writing in English, in mother tongue and in translation studies state the questions before the age old prominent patriarchy. Today the works of Kamla Markandya, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai and Manju Kapur, Geetha Hariharan, Shashi Deshpande, Kiran Desai and many more have left an indelible imprint of their valuable contribution shadow over the mind of the readers of Indian fiction in English. According to Patricia Meyer Specks: “There seems to be something that we call a women’s point of view on outlook sufficiently distinct to be recognizable through the countries” (qtd. In Indian Writer’s overview). Today the women writers have great contribution in the field of social, political, economical development and they offer their great responsibilities in various sphere of the life. According to Anita Desai :“Literature cannot be torn away from the fabric of life as though it were a decoration or an excrescence—it is woven into it, inextricably”. By the point of view of Virginia Woolf about the working classes: “Genius is not born of laboring, uneducated, servile people, and that is all women have been in Asia for a very long time” (Gupta 10).
From the historical perspective it has been noticed that Indian Literature has been passed through the various sphere of literary creation such as ‘Indo-Anglican Literature’, ‘Indo-English Literature’, ‘Indian Writing in English’ and recently ‘Indian English Literature’ (Sudharkar 100). Indian literature has acquired the very vital place in the world’s literature. The reason of its fame among the Indian as well as foreign readers is the successful recapturing and reflecting the multi-cultural aspect of the society. Indian writers have made the most significant contribution in creation of the field of fiction. Certain aspects like feminism, male domination, patriarchal society, cultural and traditional aspect of the Indian society, belief, life of Indians, the hidden psyche of human has been depicted not only in fiction but also in poetry, essays, short stories, plays etc. Around 18th century, the combination of factors led to the decline of women writing in India. In 1600 then East India Company was established which had given the most priority to the British Government rules establishment and the women were discarded from the courtship as well as kept far away from the education and economic development or working freedom. This led almost the end and the lost of the literary creation of women in the field of literature. In 19th century the trend of giving education to women had been started and the reformist movement had got shape. Women started to rebel against of the British rule. The freedom of women, liberation of the women as an individual, the equal human being, started woven along with the Nationalistic movement.

The earliest women literature had been started by Savitribai Phule, the first modern feminist social reformer and educationist of the 19th century Maharashtra (1831-1897), who along with her husband campaigned for the worth of the women education and she started the school for girls. Phule introduced the concept of education for girls and Dalits by starting a school. Besides she questioned the patriarchal, Brahminical and casteist forces prevalent in Maharashtra. She also campaigned for the rights of widows to a normal life. In 1852 she founded the first women’s association, called the ‘Mahila Seva Mandal’, and discerned the layers of oppression that Dalit women underwent on account of both gender and caste. She is also the pioneer of the institutional care for the abandoned women and the children by opening a home. The wife of Jyotirao Phule, the poet and the writer too started the campaigned for the women’s liberation and development in Maharashtra which led the new path to Pandita Rambai to work with full
strength. (Kanchana 54-55). Pandita Rambai Saraswati who was educated both in English and in Sanskrit, wrote *The High Caste Hindu Woman (1888)* in which she argued against the patriarchal reading of the Hindu Scriptures and early scholarly works of learned Brahmins which encouraged a repressive and demeaning interpretation favouring the suppression of women (Kanchana 124). By focusing on the plight of the “upper – caste Hindu women”, Rambai maintained against Nationalists that Hindu Indian women did not ever enjoy a past glory, but always had to be contended with three unhappy phases of age: childhood, marriage and widowhood. Rambai had a strong feminist approach in dissonance with the feminine. This is evident in her claim “....that the chief needs of high-caste Hindu women are: first, self-reliance; second, education; and third, native women teachers” (Kanchana 54-55). Rambai presented the idea in relation of the history and the philosophy of the modernity yet the tension steel tossed between feminine and feminist dimensions in her work. The Buddhist nuns (*Theri*), Gargi, Maitreyi and the medieval saint Mirabai who have paved the modern feminism of Rambai (Kanchana 63).

Indian Feminism has been raised along with the Indian Nationalism, at the time of freedom movement, in which the women of India participated, the most and fought for the Nation, equally participated into it. The footprint of M. K. Gandhi changed the scenario of the Indian social condition. He summoned the Indian women to take part in the Indian freedom movement. It’s not merely any simple kind of ‘ism’ but the struggle for liberation, equal right and a fair chance for women to rise, and get the equal right to be developed. Feminism is whole of a movement in which women give voice to their silence. The Indian women novelists, poetess, story writers etc. have initiatively tried and are trying to give voice to those silence and the crushing voices of the women through their women protagonists in their works. The contemporary feminist movements assume the equality of man and woman and seek to achieve for women a role in society which such equality warrants. Feminist literature reflects the female perspectives, female sensibilities and female psychology. Feminism is rapidly developing critical ideology of great promise. It has evolved in to a philosophy encompassing diverse field of human activity in society. The feminist theory, its varied articulation and it’s ramification in a literary context constitute a significant segment for critical endeavor. Women writers such as Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Nayantara Sahagal and Arundhati Roy
deals with the problem and, she endeavors to portray the feminine sensibility in their novels. Indian English women writers have mainly a phenomenal contribution to Indian literature in English and world literature. The last two decades have witnessed the tremendous race in feminist writing of the Indian novelists such as Kamla Markandaya, Nayantara Sahagal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Rama Mehta, Manju Kapoor, Gita Hariharan, Shobha De, Gauri Deshpande and Jampa Lahiri present female subjugation and feminine sensibility in their novels. Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Kamala Das and Susan Vishwanathan have put Kerela, a state in south India on the map of the literary world. The writing of the Indian English women writers is basically concerned with the quest for identity and self. They portray women’s relationship with men, children, their families and situation. They also depict the conflict of their inner psyche. Writers like Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai both and many other women writers have tried successfully to shape out the inner hidden real self of women. They have put before us the unsteady flow of the journey of their women characters’ inner self. They reflected the same, what is the reality in the society and the real condition of the women.

Shashi Deshpande is the first Indian English writer since Mulk Raj Anand who has focused on the downtrodden class. For Shashi Deshpande: ‘Feminism’ means an improved relationship between man and woman, an eraser of gender discrimination and all oppressive practices against a woman from “female foeticide and unequal pay to dowry and rape” (“No Woman is an Island”12). Most of her characters are rooted in the values and morals of the Indian middle-class. Her concept of feminism is particularly Indian in the sense that it is borne out of the predicament of Indian women placed between contradictory identities. The women characters are portrayed having colours of the Indian culture and tradition, having tried to bind the family in well unification along with the self position and self identity establishment in the family. They escape for sometimes but for renewing themselves. They return back and re-establish themselves with new strength and power. In her novel three types of the women protagonists can be found. First is, traditional mothers having firm belief of husband is God and the house of her husband is the ultimate destination till the death. Second type is bold women who are self-reliant and rebellious. They don’t surrender before the conventional and stereotype vision of womanhood and the social concepts, mythological submissive confirmation and
social tradition, culture, belief, custom, and approach. Third type of protagonists are, the
women neither involved in traditional approach and radicalism in ideas and practice.
Shashi Deshpande clarifies in one of her interview about her feministic approach that: “If
others see something feminist in my writings, I must say that it is not consciously done. It
is because the world for women is like that and I am mirroring the world” (Sudharkar
129). In ‘The Second Sex’ Simon De Beauvoir has given description of an independent
woman in her book that: “Ceases to be a parasite, the system based on her dependence
crumble; between her and the universe there is no longer any need for a masculine
mediator”. The main thesis of The Second Sex revolves around the idea that woman has
been held in a relationship of long standing oppression to man through her relegation to
being man’s ‘Other’. What she discovers in her multifaceted investigation into woman’s
situation, is that woman is consistently defined as the ‘Other’ by man who takes on the
role of the self. As Beauvoir explains in her Introduction : “woman is the incidental, the
inessential, as opposed to the essential. He is the subject. He is the Absolute- she is the
other”. She finds the radically unequal changes in the relationship of the man and the
woman regarding men have been privileged with expressing transcendence through
projects, while women are forced to lead the repetitive and uncreative life of immanence.
The second theme of the book starts with the most famous assertion: “One is not born,
but rather becomes, a woman.” By this, Beauvoir means to destroy the essentialism
which claims that women are born “feminine” (according to whatever the culture and the
time define it to be) but are rather constructed to be such through social indoctrination.
Beauvoir studies the roles of wife, mother, and prostitute to show how women, instead of
transcending through work and creativity, are forced into monotonous existence of having
children, tending house and being the sexual receptacles of the male libido. Beauvoir
never claims that man has succeeded in destroying woman’s freedom or in actually
turning her into an “object” in relation to his subjectivity. Beauvoir emphasis on the fact
that women need access to the same kinds of activities and the projects as men places her
to some extent in the tradition of liberal, or second-wave feminism. She views that if the
women get the equal opportunities of living, thinking, acting as per the thinking, the
rights of equal education, universal childcare, right of giving birth to the child, even
contraception and legal abortion for women- and perhaps most important women’s
economic freedom and independence from man, such kinds of the changes in the social structure and strata can save the women to suffer from the alienation and deep insecurity and sufferance. Regarding the individual freedom Simone de Beauvoir expresses that: “I wish that every human life might be pure transparent freedom” and “One’s life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others”. Beauvoir’s Second Sex deploys existential and Marxist categories to alert us to the unique complexities of women’s situation are best captured in a brief but packed sentence early in the text. It has been depicted that: “Thus woman may fail to lay claim to the status of subject because she lacks definite resources, because she feels the necessary bond that ties her to man regardless of reciprocity, and because she is often very well pleased with her role as the Other.” (Second Sex, xxiv, xxv). This phenomenological – existential statement needs to be read in the context of Beauvoir’s ethical-political question: “How can a human being in a woman’s situation attain fulfilment?” (Second Sex, xxxiv) (Bhasker 76). The Second Sex, with its theme of woman as the ‘Other’ marks a radical departure even from Beauvoir’s other post-war texts. Personal relationships are at central stage, but the personal has been reconceived as political. She views boldly that the women are not simply free individuals, but members of an oppressed caste, defined as inferior by religion and science; socialized to a psychological dependency on men; and restricted in their political and economical activities by laws and social convention.

1.1.1.4 Focus on the Two Women Novelists’ Works

Shashi Deshpande attempts to deconstruct the numerous levels of patriarchal and sexist bias employed towards girls and women in Indian middle-class society, particularly in a marriage or within the family set-up. She is a feminist who shows perception and awareness of the dilemma facing woman in a society which is predominantly patriarchal. She has presented the social rules rooted stereotypical ways in the middle class family and it is among the middle classes that the stereotypical values attached to social roles are most studiedly inculcated in the girl child. The cause of the conflict and oppression of the woman is originated within the family. Interpersonal relationships are fraught with friction at the emotional, intellectual and sexual level. The socialization of the girl child has been taken place through various means. Folklore, rituals, prescriptive conduct codes
and restrictions are repeated continuously to her throughout her growing years. In *That Long Silence, Roots and Shadows, The Dark Holds No Terrors* Shashi Deshpande criticises the approach of the male-dominated society.

In *That Long Silence* Jaya has been born and brought up by special sense of individuality but after her father’s death she becomes burden for her elder brother, Dada who wants to get rid earliest from Jaya’s responsibility. After marrying with Mohan, Jaya has become ‘Suhasini’. Jaya keeps observing silent throughout her whole marriage life only she could break it when she starts writing. She pours her disappointment, isolation, suffering, squeezing of self in her novel. Jaya presents that reflection of the Indian Women who have the creativity but still face lots of dilemma and traumatic situation to keep up their creativity. Jaya though an educated woman she is treated by male-dominated society as an ‘object’ and not an ‘individual’. She becomes like showpiece after her marriage. *That Long Silence* is about the suffering of an educated woman, focuses the predicament of a ‘Modern Indian Woman’ caused by the insensitivity and rigidity of her husband and making her a victim of circumstances. Jaya presents the appearance of the self recognition and self-analysis of every woman. In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is a compelling story of a well educated, economically independent women’s struggle against all odds. Sarita, the protagonist of *The Dark Holds No Terrors* grows up a victim of her mother’s gender bias. As a child, she is aware of her mother’s preference for her brother and frequently made realize the hurting experiences. As an educated woman and feminist, she rewrites her childhood with an awareness of gender injustice. She feels that she doesn’t have the value as a girl child in her own family. She faces the gender bias approach by her own mother. Sarita got marry with the choice of her own man yet she becomes the victim of rape by her husband frequently. At parental home she became the victim of the bias attitude of the mother while at her husband’s home she becomes the victim of rape done by her own husband and his hidden anger, the high dissatisfaction and burden of masculinity. She feels the high rejection of herself by man. Manohar, Sarita’s husband in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is the kind of traditional male who succumbs to the challenge posed to his ego by a woman’s financial superiority. *The Dark Hold No Terrors* is the story of rape but with a large canvas. Saru becomes the victim of her husband’s hurt ego which exerts his animal power over her body. She can’t
tolerate the total opposite appearance of Manohar between the day light and the dark night. Also in *Roots and Shadows*, Indu feels suffocation and disintegration in marriage life that render her physical or emotional gratification. Indu’s husband Jayant doesn’t understand the language of her desirable love. He refuses to accept passion in the woman. The pain, anger, frustration, disappointment, the absurdity of her life and emotional polarity with her husband come out from their stagnant stereotype relationship. Indu finds herself, from sharp tongue to the tone, from an independent to dependent woman. She herself feels the duality of self and the silence which is gifted after marriage. The collection of Shashi Deshpande’s works proves that her creations are the real genius of the fiction. In all the three major novels, the story takes the protagonists back to her simple childhood home, where nonetheless she is comfortable and even happy. Indu, Saru and Jaya are all facing problems in their adult married life, and a return to the parental home is the reaction of those problems. Shashi Deshpande has strong convictions about feminism. She believes in gender equality where both the gender can live with equality having faced all what is called natural life the way they want. She believes that in the Indian society it’s too hard for Indian women to find or set up their identity in the family as well as in the society. Deshpande’s feminism is not in a way targeting the male as the reasons of all the troubles. According to her: “*The faults lies with the woman who submit to the male’s sense of superiority*” (Agrwal 17). Shashi Deshpande presents the plausible story of the authentic characters and not shadowy abstractions—‘airy things’ without ‘local habitation and a name’ (Agrwal 17). She presents the life not in stereotype mode or it should be but she presents the life what it is in the typical circumstances with the typical characters with their whole originality of the inner and the outer appearance. Deshpande’s writing is the reflection of Indian Literature which emerges from her rootedness in the middle class Indian society. Hindu tradition plays the biggest role in it. Feminism doesn’t mean of militant feminism in case of Deshpande’s writing but the voice for equality as human being. However Prabhat K. Singh has viewed about The Dark Holds No Terrors that: “*This novel is not about a woman or about feminism but about life and living. To me it is a fictional portrayal of highly pragmatic philosophy of life --- Atma deepo bhava’* that means ‘Be your Own Light” (Madhurima 257).
According to, Anita Desai says about women’s identity that: “I don’t think anyone’s exile from society can solve any problem. I think the problem is how to exist in society and yet maintain one’s individuality rather than suffering from a lack of society and a lack of belonging” (qtd. in INDIAN WOMEN WRITERS AN OVERVIEW).

The poignant racial of women in Anita Desai’s novels draws the picture of an uncommunicative miseries and vulnerability of millions of married women, tortured and tormented by existentialist problems and dilemmas. The novel Where Shall We Go This Summer? reflects the irreconcilable inner and outer world, the imponderable gulf between expectation and reality, leading to the anguish of the sensitive soul. Sita is a middle class married woman of forty, mother of four children and expecting too of the fifth child. Constant pregnancy made her restless. She finds children as the misery, pessimism, worry and not happiness. She needs the child but not to be born outside, but keep in womb. Sita strongly feels that she is forcibly evacuated from the theatrical era of her life and violently led into the ‘ordinary’, ‘empty’, ‘meaningless’ and ‘mundane married life’, offering her no contentment. She finds herself full of cavity and dissonance between her children and husband. Sita seeks to escape essentially from the cannibalism that is operative, unseen and unobserved, in contemporary city life. Sita’s self-exile to the island is her ultimate rejection of the male dominated values of her husband’s world.

According to B. Ramchandra Rao: “Where Shall We Go This Summer? as the dramatisation of the conflict between two incompatible constitutions of diametrically reversed tendencies towards life”. He concludes by stating that: “The tragedy ‘Where Shall We Go This Summer?’ arises out of the inability of the characters to connect the prose and the passion in their lives. They have lived only in fragments. The novel ends with a dependent and despondent Sita unable to rediscover the passion of life. But the book ends with the only implicit comment that this need not have been the only ending. It could have turned out otherwise” (Gupta 165).

In both Cry, The Peacock writer unfolds the world of Maya and Sita along with the polarity of the two sexes, the aridity and the hypocrisy of their husband’s male chauvinistic societies Cry, The peacock is a moving story of a sensitive young, educated Hindu woman who withers away and ultimately dies. Maya is a childless woman with an
uncaring husband, she is lonely and loneliness is a bane and a burden of her ‘self’. This novel is the exploration of the turbulent emotional world of the neurotic protagonist, Maya who feels suffocation and smashed under the force of the acute alienation, stemming from marital discord, and verges on a curious insanity. H.M Williams’ approach appears to be apt that: “Cry, The Peacock is a disturbing first novel, mostly takes the form of inferior monologue delineating the tragic mental breakdown of a young Indian woman, Maya” (Gupta 157).

Ann Lowry Weir, a remarkable critic, rightly assesses the character of Maya in terms of man-woman relationship through Indian ethos and culture. In this way, in his critical estimation the critic suggests: “Maya is an Indian and her throughout an Indianness about them, despite their distributed state. She reflects on Indian weather, Indian flora and fauna, Indian religious and mythical figures” (Gupta 157).

So the women of the novels of Anita Desai unfold the mystery of the Feminine Psyche of the middle class Indian families. A silent sufferer, a showpiece of Indian culture and a cog in the family wheel and without an identity of her own to accomplish self-gratification and self-fulfilment, the ethnic Indian woman is depicted in a multiplicity of roles such as - mother, wife, daughter and sister. Anita Desai’s characters reveal her vision of life through her characters of the novel, especially women protagonists. Meena Belliappa remarks that: “The incompability of character stands revealed---Gautama who touches without feeling and Maya who feels even without touching” (Gupta 155). The research explores the world of the novel Cry, The peacock with the special focus of Maya seeking with the quest of self who kills Gautam by pushing him from the parapet and commits suicide at last herself too. This is the main concern lies in the novel quest for and seeking of self. The title of the book is quite suggestive Cry, The Peacock is about Maya’s cries for love. The cry of peacock symbolises Maya’s agony for love and life. Gautam can see no value in anything less than the ideas and theories born of human and perfectly male brains. Maya gets starves for the companionship of her husband and spends the sleepless nights in the bedroom (Gupta 156).

Anita Desai seems reluctant to accept abstractions and idealistic representation and study the disturbed psyche and predicaments of modern Indian woman. Her writing
often describes the conflict and struggles within Indian families against the background of historic events or social change. She has presented the feminine sensibility in the novels with the colours of human inner world. Mostly her characters are deep in to the colours of the Indianization.

1.1.1.5 Definition of ‘Self’

- “The self is the subject of one’s own experience of phenomenon: perception, emotions and thoughts. In phenomenology, it is conceived as what experiences, and there isn’t any experiencing without an experience, the self. The self is therefore an ‘immediate given’, an intrinsic dimension of the fact of experiencing phenomena” (qtd. In Self-concept).

- According to the Religious point of view: “The self is a complex and core subject in many forms of spirituality. Two types of self are commonly considered – the self that is the ego, also called the learned, superficial self of mind and body, an egoistic creation, and the self which is sometimes called the ‘The Self’, the ‘Observing Self’, or the ‘Witness’. Buddhism considers ‘Self’ is an illusion that serves us the main cause of suffering and unhappiness. While Christianity makes distinction between the true self and the false self, and sees the false self negatively, distorted through sin….” (qtd. In Definition of Self).

- The famous sociologist George Herbert Mead conceptualized the mind as individually important of the social process. This process is characterized by Mead as the ‘I’ and the ‘me’. The ‘me’ is the social self and the ‘I’ is response to ‘me’. ‘I’ is self as subject: the ‘me’ is self as object (qtd. In Sociological Theory of the Self).

- “A self-concept is a collection of belief about one’s own nature, unique qualities, and typical behaviour” (Cherry). Self concept is the mental picture of one’s own self and the collection of the self-perception (Cherry).

- According to the psychological concept of self: “self concept or self identity is the mental and conceptual understanding and persistent regard that sentient beings hold for their own existence. In other words it is the sum total of a being’s knowledge and understanding of his or her self. The concept of self is different from the self-
consciousness, which is an awareness or preoccupation with one’s own self. Components of self concept include physical, psychological, and social attributes can be condensed to the general concepts of self-image and the self-esteem (qtd. In Self – Concept).

- According to Sociological concept of self: “The self is the individual person, from his or her own perspective. Self-awareness is the capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile oneself as an individual separate from the environment and the other individuals” (qtd. In Sociological Theory of the Self).

- According to oxford dictionary: “One’s particular nature or personality ; the qualities that make one, individual or unique”.

1.1.1.6 Concept of Existential Feminism

The presented research study deals with the search for ‘Self’ of the Indian middle class educated women and their struggle for identity, who suffer from alienation, lack of communication, lack of emotional understanding, trapped in socio-idealism, suppression of skills, abilities and the individuality, rape in marriages, killing of self—honour, dignity, rejection as human being, treating as ‘Other’.

Existentialist Feminism deals with the concept of freedom, interpersonal relationships, and the experience of living as a human body. Simone de Beauvoir was a renowned existentialist and principal founder of the Second wave feminism. She has reflected the secondary role of the women as ‘Other’ in her book, ‘The Second Sex’. (qtd. In Existential Feminism) In the fifth chapter of Rosemary Tong’s book, ‘Feminist thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction’, focusing over the existential feminism in concern of the analysis of the book ‘The Second Sex’ of Simone De Beauvoir. Simone de Beauvoir believes that men created myth about women’s being ideal regarding the definite definition of her duty and sacrifice for her man. She believes what makes the myth horrible is that many women come to internalize this thought as an accurate reflection of what it means to be a woman. She goes on talk about the sense of ‘Otherness’ is cemented in the institution of marriage and motherhood. Women believe that the women finds safety, feeling of freedom but marriage transforms these feelings into mandatory duties. Patriarchy modifies the women and decides certain roles as an ideal mother, daughter, wife etc. Simone de
Beauvoir firmly believes that there are four ways by which the women can overcome this oppression. Women should go for work, become intellectual, work towards social reforms, and refuse to internalize the ‘Otherness’ that has been created (Dussell181-191). Existentialist feminism is derived from the school of thought of Simone de Beauvoir. According to her point of view women are not always powerless and need not to be dependent over male-female relationship. She, in a way favours the prostitution where she thinks that prostitution allows women an avenue of escape from dependency on men in a way that, it doesn’t leave them victims, but empowered women. Freedom and equality is desirable in case of both male and female. Simone de Beauvoir appears to exalt all women as possessing the capacity to realize their innate power in the sense of the feminine warrior spirit. In the existentialist view, the power of a competent woman on a man is not an illusion. Man always tries to devalue this power but women’s power is something called undefeated and with women power and competence this male power is not incontrovertible (qtd. In Existential Feminism).

1.1.1.7 Review of Literature

Various criticisms have been written on these two women novelists’ works, which have focused the various aspects of Hindu women’s life and condition which has disclosed the doors of their inner real world deep in to the darkness, covered with the silence, with the untold woes of tears and cries before the society which has been discussed broadly in the final work. Dr. M.F Patel has exposed the Feminine psyche in his work *An Exposure Feminine Psyche in Some of The Novels of Anita Desai*. In this work he discussed the various aspects of Anita Desai who has presented the women duality, the dark interiors of the human psyche, disintegration thematic aspect, also presentation of the women psyche through the various symbols. Dr. S. P. Swain has focused on Jaya, the character of *That Long Silence* the crushing of self after marriage, the incompatibility between her and her husband, the Educated cultured woman who finds herself slave in her own house, the silence that is the symbol of assertion of the feminine voice. Vincent Aerathu, *Down Dark Corridors: Wives in Shashi Deshpande's Select Novels*, the writer throws light on the male domination, their taking of their wives
as the passive, secondary, other, inferior than them, also how the patriarchal institution’s enslaving motives towards women.

K.K Sunalini. (2011), Wo(men)-Journey of Life in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Anne Tyler in her work enlightens the concept of “Feminism” by the point of view of Shashi Deshpande, her prospective towards her female protagonists, with the exploration of the women’s inner hidden condition, subordination of the women. Dr. Ruby Milhoutra reflects the woman predicament in Feminist Consciousness in Anita Desai’s Cry, The Peacock and Where Shall We Go This Summer? - Amar Nath Prasad,T.S Ramesh (2011) focus over the tremendous presentation of human psyche in Anita Desai The Novelist Par Excellence. In this book the writers enlightens the criticism over the heroines of Anita Desai who traditionally un-intellectual women who are dependent on their husbands, need of women’s economic emancipation as well as education so as male dominance.

This research has focused on the voice of the ‘self’ of those women who are ‘everywhere’ in the society in the country or beyond the borders of understanding. The exploration of those ‘voices’ which have never come out of the four walls of family and their restricted wall of image as the Indian cultured women.

S. Somasundari Latha has given the finest review in her research article Jaya’s Quest for Self in Shashi Deshpande’s That Long Silence from the journal Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal on the novel of Shashi Deshpande That Long Silence the deep disturbance and frustration of the female protagonist Jaya. S. Latha has presented Jaya with the right perspective which directly connects Jaya in large with the Indian educated women in general, who are dominated and suppressed by the male dominated society though they are educated, able, capable, skillful, well dreamer, finest achiever, firm in decision and stable minded persons, in their personal relationships as well as in the working field. They are bound and crushed by their identity suppressing from each little bit aspect of the personality and natural needs through the male-female dominated society. Mohan is typical Indian male who is satisfied with the well educated, well cultured girl for marriage. He even decides the criteria for Jaya regarding appearance, behaviour, expression, writing, speaking and outlook too. ‘Jaya’s name changed in to ‘Suhasini’ at her husband’s home, which hurts her a lot. Mohan stops her
creative writing and moulds her writing as per his wish and advice. She was expected to be loyal in bribery of Mohan but Jaya can’t do that. Her silence was interpreted wrong by Mohan. For Jaya, her silence is suffocating the self and nothing else.

S. Latha presented the dilemmas, suffocation and disturbance of the Educated Indian woman who understands “What is right?” and “What is wrong?”. Jaya wants to come out of it and even she tries for that there too she was stopped by her husband by thinking of exposition of their personal life. Jaya becomes the medium of what the wife should do and not to do by their husband’s point of view and the family’s point of view. Mohan, Kamat and Jaya’s father are the three dimension of the male in the Indian family generally could be seen. Her father tried to make her ‘Jaya’-- the ‘woman of victory ’ in real sense by educating her well enough equal like boy, Kamat inspired her to disclose the real self by pouring out her real anger with bare form while Mohan stopped her to do that. He said her not to write such stories which can be misunderstood by the relatives and the society. S. Latha has viewed about Jaya that she feels so much free in presence of Kamat. She feels to be with her self. Not as woman, not as wife or anything else.

Dr. Sushilkumar Sindkhedkar has given his view on Where Shall We Go This Summer? in the book Anita Desai and Arun Joshi a study in Existentialism on the character of Sita who has four children and having fairly comforts in her life at her husband’s home, in Bombay. Ironically it has been depicted that Sita seeks an escape from this world which symbolizes her effect, ennui and death too. The incident of the crows scavenging the eagle accosts her with an inevitable reality of the death. The love making of the old man and the young woman shocks her into an awareness of the living and consequently she seeks resolution to those miasmic experiences in a mysterious retreat to the Manori island. She goes to Manori in search of some magical effect which can help her not to give birth to that child instead keep it safe in the womb but that proves as illusion and soon she realises that now after her father’s death Manori island hasn’t effect of the magic but the harsh reality is that no one can easily survive there. Where Shall We Go This Summer? – this title itself is the symbolic in a ways which suggests that “where we have to go in the life after all?”, “What is our ultimate destination?”, “What is the Meaning of Life?”, “Have we attend that meaning?”, “Can there be any escape in life?” ---- Anita Desai attempts to provide her solution to the riddle of life and it is quite
convincing and appealing to the reader. The central theme of the novel is Sita’s sudden being rebellious to the birth of the child in her womb. Sita’s repugnant disgust with the birth of the fifth child is woven with her seeking of self worth and self identification in her family. Sita who had the deepest intimacy with the children now has been changed which has come from modern town culture, habitant and life way. The strain involved in the childbirth earlier was not felt, but now it has been felt and makes her irritated and restless. Sita tries to escape from the predicament of being hospitalised, the doctors, the nurses their treatment and attitude etc. All these are unbearable for her. Anita Desai consists in the fact that she made Sita rebellious to the current notions of womanhood as a sexual or procreative automaton. Sita finds the Modern civilization is crazy for sensitive soul. Sita finds the life of the children will be more complicated if they want to survive here. She finds the modern life is full of chaotic and she doesn’t want her fifth child to be born here and grow up in such cruelty. Sita doesn’t want to give birth to a child because she doesn’t find the world is fit for the birth of the child. Husband – wife marital discord, inadequacy of their mutual love relationship and some sort of dissatisfaction is another measure theme in the novel along with the quest of self.

Apart from the search for self by female protagonists in the literature there can be found the search over the patriarchal system of the society and women’s predicament turns ultimately in feministic fight which is focused by the present study of Mukta Atrey and Vinay Kirpal who have given us the short biography of Shashi Deshpande’s life and career along with her valuable contribution in the field of literature in an “Introduction” in the book - Shashi Deshpande A Feminist Study of Her Fiction. The monograph proposes to undertake a culture-specific feminist reading of Deshpande’s fiction. Such writing necessitates a feminist reading what makes her the most interesting author to study is her ability to depict situations, characters, dilemma straight out of everyday domestic life. In this research the writers have focused on the concept of feminism and the approach of the Anglo-American feminist since the seventies in which many of the female writers were neglected, silenced and excluded from the main stream of literature. In this age the modern time, both male - female writers have included the sexism in literature. Their principal objective has been to expose patriarchal practices. This study shows the approach of Shashi Deshpande about feminism, that feminism – which means
improvement in relationship between man and woman, an erasure of gender discrimination and all oppressive practices against a woman from “female foeticide and unequal pay to dowry and rape” (‘No Woman is an Island’ 12). This monograph is in six chapters. First focus is on Introduction, the second focus is on the major works of Shashi Deshpand, and the third focus is on the role of Fathers, husbands, Lovers and others, the forth chapter reflects Mothers, daughters, wives, beloveds, Aunts and others. The fifth chapter focuses on “women in Indian Society” and the sixth chapter puts emphasise on “The Art of Shashi Deshpande” which makes a final summation of Deshpande as an artist. This study enlightens some of the most prominent characteristics of Shashi Deshpande as the greatest contributors in the field of the Indian English Literature.

Study of Dam of Silence: A study of Shashi Deshpande’s That Long Silence. In the edited book Great Women Writers of the world by Dr. Marykutty Alex depicts the female protagonist with two different perspectives first is of Indian middle class educated woman engaged in menial domestic chores to earn their living and seeking for the self identity and the financial independence. Jaya is the writer who writes her articles, short stories not by her choice but by the strata of her husband’s choice. Jaya didn’t make any career except being writer due to her house and husband’s choice and for the children. Even she moulds out herself by the choice and desire of Mohan. Mohan considers Jaya by other’s point of view not by her beauty, likes –dislikes but how do the other women look beautiful? It’s a self realization for Jaya that as a girl she has to just wait like any other girls in this country she also had to wait unconditionally like about marriage, husband’s arrival, kid’s birth, their growth, their returning from school, etc..., besides her hardship to win the trust and admiration of her husband and in-lows. Jaya too seeks some place of her in her house in her own relationship which she didn’t expect from Mohan but she gets from Kamat, her widower friend. She realizes to be ‘self’ with him. She is Jaya and not Mohan’s wife, mother of Rahul and Rati, but only Jaya whom Kamat knows. Enmeshed in the Indian family system, Jaya has lost her authenticity as a human being. Jaya shaped herself by Mohan’s choice, given up job and also the thought of adopting the baby, also take part in anti-price campaign. Jaya’s sexual life too doesn’t give her satisfaction. She thinks she can sleep with Mohan without any intense desire and without any wish, there is no difference in both the situation. With Kamat she is there, her ‘self’ is
there. She expresses her hidden desires, her likes and dislikes, her pouring of anger and the strong disagreement before Kamat which she can’t do before Mohan. Jaya in this novel revolts against the age old tradition of the Indian society and goes ahead to win her quest for liberation. The present study focuses on the deep glimpses of the character of the female protagonist Jaya, as the archetypal character of the Indian middle class educated modern woman struggles for the establishment of self identity.

In the work of Arvind M. Nawale, *The Seeking Self: The quest for self in Anita Desai’s Cry, The Peacock* in the book *Feminine Fragrance Reflecting on Women’s Writing in English*, the writer has focused on the writing of Anita Desai is an endeavour to ascertain and communicate the true significance of ‘Self’. Her protagonist suffers from anguish of existence in an antagonistic and male-dominated society. They are seen undergoing distressing psychic experience due to the collapse of a value-system and lack of fitting alternatives. The inability to connect the self with the society resulted in to the seeking of self which has been explored by this novel. The traditional marriage failed to create the conditions favourable for the mental health of Maya. Gautam hardly cares for her emotions. Her husband was much older to her to understand her sensitive world. Gautam gets insensitive when she feels the extreme desire of sex. She waits for his arriving into bed and but ends that in yawing only. Maya is unfixed in the modern world, along with the cups of tea and the cold philosophy of her husband which leads her to seek for the self identity in her own little world. The anger comes out from squeezing of the each smallest feelings and emotions. Death of her pet dog Toto leads her in deepest depression. The research explores the world of the novel *Cry, The peacock*, with the special focus of Maya seeking with the quest of self who kills Gautam by pushing him from the parapet and commits suicide at last herself too. This is the main concern lies in the novel quest for self.

The research study of Grishma Manikrao Khobragade, in *Empowerment of Women and Personal Mobility in Shashi Deshpande’s The Dark Holds No Terrors* from the book *Feminine Fragrance Reflecting on Women’s Writing in English*, depicts the homecoming of Saru (Sarita) the main female protagonist of the novel in search of the meaning of her life and her identity. This is the novel where the educated Indian middle class woman seeks for her, self - identity. She suffers for her position and the worth in her
life. Saru is interested in improving her financial and social status. She marries Manu just because he took her to be an equal. She is also self-centred. She always tries to build up her self-image as such that she forces Mohan to surrender his ego before her. She nullifies Manu’s existence and makes him a cipher. She thinks that all men are weak and inferior. Her profession makes her self sufficient status and she learns to command the others. Saru was born and brought up in the traditional family and suffers from gender bias from her and her brother kept by her mother. It’s a self realization of Saru that she plays different roles throughout the day, in day time she is a doctor in white coat but in the night she is like a trapped animal. She couldn’t tolerate the blame of her mother to kill Dhruva, her younger brother. Saru hates her mother and her words too. She escaped before many years in seeking of the self position, self identity but at her husband’s home too she feels something lack. She returns back to her childhood home but again returns back to Manu as she found there has been broken off her from the past life and peaceful harmony. She is isolated in her own house. She always feels insecure, alone and homeless. The writer of the research paper emphasises on the issue on which Shashi Deshpande put the large force - is the condition of middle class woman. In her novels women of all class are marginalized though a degree of marginalization differs from person to person. The women are educated and skillful enough who seeks for their identity in the family, in the personal life, in the society but the very large unadjusted condition always happens between them and the family, between their inner world ideals and the society where they have the thirst for ‘self’ lifetime. The present study reflects the condition of the Indian women who are suppressed under many pressures and emotional force of guilt and bondages given by the Patriarchal society which could be realized through the character of Saru.

Once again there has been focus on the Indian culture and the position of the Middle class women in Suchi Agrawal’s *Reconciliation of Self-identity and Marital Bond in Shashi Deshpande’s Roots And Shadows and That Long Silence* from the book *Great Indian Authors in English Critical Ruminations*. Ours is the typical male-dominated society where women are accepted as secondary. Also the women from the ancient times are covered with many a thick, slack layers of prejudice, convention, ignorance and reticence in literature as well as in life too. The paper study focuses that Shashi
Deshpande portrays modern, educated and career-oriented middle class women, who are quite sensitive to the cultural and social shortcomings to which they are subjected in this male-dominated society. They rebel against their men in search for freedom and identity, but ultimately find themselves up against well-entrenched social inertia. She finds her women crushed in a conflict between their family and professional roles, between individual aspiration and social demands. Shashi Deshpande’s little life glimpses can be seen in this paper and depiction of her interview on BBC news channel: “I never decided that, I was going to become a writer, it was never a conscious decision. I got married, I had no definite career, I had two children, and I was restless, with just being a housewife and mother. I had these two children, no friends, so then we returned and he (her husband) said: “Why don’t you write about our one year there? Then I joined a journalism course. I loved writing, I felt at home with it. I think in one way I stumble into it, but I really think of it this way as writing was something which was waiting for me along the line and then I reached that point and then I knew what my life was.” (2003, http://www.BBC.CO.uk/world send/Her story/women writers//). Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonists are consistently pressured in clumsy, knotty relationships, her women firmly refuse to become prisoners of orthodoxies, fossilized traditions; and stereo typically idealized identities. The research focuses on the aspects such as the women protagonists rebelled against their men seeking for the identity. They find their worth, place, position, acceptance, their life with the self dignity. They didn’t wish to be interpreted but they demand to be lived with the self-dignity and self-respect. The women protagonists seek for the job, for economical freedom and their struggle for establishing the self-identity. The research focuses on the role of the women protagonists who are caught in their conflict between responsibilities to oneself and conformity to the traditional role of a wife. They do not accept to be considered as the object of gratification but they challenge their victimization and find a new balance of power between the sexes. Indu in Roots And Shadows aspires for the personhood, so that she escaped from Akka and her feminine dominant world and gets marry with Jayant the man of different caste but still she seeks for the personhood. She finds herself as ‘Self’ with her cousin Naren rather than with Jayant. She is more and more expressive before Naren than before Jayant. The novel gains its feminist stance and its outright utterance of Indu.
In ‘That Long Silence’ Jaya is highly educated, modern middle class woman who is quite understanding but the silent sufferer who neither rejects Mohan’s illegal work nor she accepts that. She is silently with him. For Jaya the silence and surrender are the only tools. She can’t support him openly so that Mohan without informing her left the home by warning her not to come again. The researcher has disclosed the role of Mohan which injures the readers who is insensitive husband and also the son which continuous discriminated against Jaya.

The present paper highlights both the heroines Jaya and Indu with the appearance of a new Indian woman who are rooted in the Indian custom though they are influenced by the scientific knowledge of the west which connects them with the thirst of seeking for self exploration and ultimately resulted in emergence as human being.

The present research study of Satendra Kumar, *Quest for Self and Identity in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande* from the book *Insights into Indian English Fiction Dramas* enlightens the deep colours of man-woman relationship on a large canvas of human life and experience. The female protagonists reject so-called traditional roles, code of conducts, and norms of the patriarchal society. The female protagonists want to preserve not only the self identity but also the identity as human being. The present paper focuses on the chief aspects that the female protagonists of Deshpande’s novels withdraw temporary, is the process of preserving the self- identity, self-dignity, Detachment is the process of preservation. Her protagonists go for this withdrawal as a tool for both introspection and self realization. The pattern of identity crisis in her novels passes through five stages: Traditional holds of patriarchy, breaking the silence, ultimate turning back to their home. Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, suffers from rootless in her own house and also suffers from gender bias from the childhood so that she starts search for the new space where she can get worth, she gets marry with Manohar with whom she expects to be important and established with whole ‘Self’ but that didn’t go too far. She finds subjugation before the wild being of Manu. At home she had high force on her mind by the gender bias attitude of her mother, at her husband’s home she passes through the mental, physical and personal presser. In *That Long Silence Jaya* accepts the life like ‘Gandhari’ who shuts her eyes towards her husband’s involvement in illegal earning. Influenced by the centuries-old silence of women, she doesn’t express her opinion
frankly. Even her journalistic writing was too modified by her husband's wish and guidance. The present paper depicts that Shashi Deshpande defines the issue of female identity not as a sentimental feminist but speculates the whole phenomenon on the wider context, call of humanism. The female protagonists like Jaya, Saru, Indu and Urmi are frustrated in their personal relationship but they nowhere venture to escape the family responsibilities. The very valuable aspects of Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonists are--that the female identity is dealt with the two levels:

A). A woman’s quest to search out her individuality.

B). A woman’s quest to balance her identity along with her feminity.

In *Roots And Shadows* Indu breaks the barriers of the imperialistic existence of Akka and goes against of her and gets marry with Jayant, in rebellion against Akka’s dictatorial authority. The antagonism of mother and daughter relationship is closely related with the issue of the quest for identity. Feminism in its true spirit is a movement to record the direct experience of women to understand the reality of being a ‘woman’. To present the female protagonist Shashi Deshpande has used the largest canvas of conception.

Besides, the present research of Sapna Rani and Melva Pope’s *The Woman Question in Shashi Deshpande’s Novels*, in the book *The Woman Question in the Contemporary Indian Women Writing in English* reflects the questions of women regarding the novels of Shashi Deshpande. Man-woman relationship becomes the most significant theme of Indian fiction. The novels of Shashi Deshpande, Nayantara Sahgal, Bharti Mukhrjee reflects the role and place of the contemporary Indian woman and her relationship with her husband. Shashi Deshpande portrayed the strong, determine, highly educated, sensible and assertive heroines in her novels. Through this research we can be aware of the aspects that Shashi Deshpande has presented the deep personal protest against the marginalization of women as a wife and a mother. Her women get trap in to house hold cores but still cried out to come out from that suffocated trap. The woman protagonists of Shashi Deshpande’s novels achieve the personhhood yet not neglecting the family or the society. The female protagonists not only achieve their identity as woman but also the separate ‘personhood’. The heroine Jaya in *That Long Silence* at last breaks
the silence and strongly determines to express herself. The story ends with a kind of resolving. This novel is concerned with the state of modern Indian woman who is constantly trying to know herself, her inner conflict and quest for identity. The suppressed feelings bring together the two heroines Jaya from *That Long Silence* and Maya from *Cry, The Peacock* of Anita Desai, both try to bring out their real desires of an individual, one is of freedom of writing and other is of expression, live and to be being an individual. Indu of *Roots And Shadows* too gets the will of simplicity by Naren. The heroines return back not by becoming the weak but having the triumph of an independent woman. In case of Maya, in condition of unconsciousness and guilt conscience she kills herself after her husband’s death. She becomes responsible for her own tragedy.

Barkha Bansal reflects on the feminist ideology of Shashi Deshpandande which is deeply rooted in the Indian culture, traditions and norms of social behaviour in the research article *The Indian Facet of Shashi Deshpande’s Feminism* in the book *Post Independence Indian Writing in English*. The present research eliminates that the feminist author Shahsi Deshpande’s concept of feminism regarding her novel is born from her keen observation of the miserable condition of Indian women’s life in the joint families, their miserable condition to old outworn customs and conventions, our educated women’s predicament arising out of the conflict of the self crushing instincts. The Indian culture depicts the husbands are the Gods and the wives have to worship without them life is nothing. This type of glorification of the husbands is accepted with utmost awe and veneration by women in India. In case of Akka, Sunanda Atya believes in *Roots and Shadows* that woman without her husband having no importance in the family or in the society. Saru, Indu and Jaya unable to escape fully and in a bid to overcome them have to bear enormous mental and sometimes physical torture too. The female protagonists have extra marital relationships with their lovers but couldn’t keep themselves apart from the present life and responsibilities. Neither they can get back in such relationships nor feel any guilt when they involve in love as well as in sex. They return back by their own choice. In the beginning, Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists find themselves clutched in the chains of patriarchal dominance. But, as they are educated women they protest against the unjust and the unreasonable treatment met out to them. The present paper focuses on the patriarchy and the male dominated scenario and enables the matriarchy to
emerge as a powerful structure encompassing that ever-widening chasm in male-female relationship. The female protagonists of Shashi Deshpande demand the equal humanity in concern of the feelings, emotions, expressions, realizations, offering the duties and responsibilities but emancipation to be her in a far better role of being the complementary partner.

In this Research study of S.D.Sharma, *Women Emancipation and Spiritual Darwinism A Contrastive Study of The Dark Holds No Terror; That Long Silence and Roots and Shadows* from the book *Studies in Literature Language Communication and Linguistics*, the Writer focuses on the women’s quest for self in the novels of Shashi Deshpande. In her novels the females, their conflicts, their struggle for the self identity, their battle to establish their place and identity in the family, in the working field, in the society are in the central point. Her novels deal with the problems, adjustment and conflicts in the mind of the female protagonists, who ultimately submit to the tradition, and cultural scenario. The researcher found that Shashi Deshpande has tried to depict that a woman cannot lead a life independently. She has to play a role of a daughter, a wife, a mother and she is bound by duties by others. No one has sympathy for her and for the sake of existence she has to fight. In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Saru gets marriage against the traditional belief. Saru’s mother shows no sympathy for her as hers is not an arrange marriage but love marriage. She thinks if she had an arrange marriage than her family could show sympathy in her problematic marriage life but here she is invalid for that. The failure of marriage is not of girl only but of her parents too, and that’s the reason of her guilt too for life time. In *That Long Silence*, Jaya is depicted as the example of those Indian women who are taught to be silent. Jaya symbolises a women’s struggle for the self-revelation and self-assertion. Mohan inspire her to write but as per his wish and choice. He suggested her for writing. He didn’t like the award winning story of Jaya which he considered as the exposure of his family, the women of the family. He didn’t like. He showed that he was hurt. So Jaya left writing. She gets afraid by the thought of hurting Mohan. Jaya is the example of those women who are not allowed to create their life independently and who are not free to establish themselves as independent being. Saru becomes doctor against her mother’s will. She is the anti-matriarchal female character who wishes the place where her mother cannot exercise her will. Saru is the
victim of gender bias and the sexual harassment too. In *Roots And Shadows*, Indu gets marry with the man who is of a different caste and who was rejected by Akka. She was motherless child and enforced by Akka to live and mould the life by her wish. Indu can’t tolerate and she leaves the house to get love marriage with Jayant. Indu’s family shows the web of typical Indian society. The women, their approach, their marriage, their husbands, their need of money, status, their efforts of establishment in the in-lows family represent the typical Indian social atmosphere. Indu too is a writer and she is a free will persona but covered up with the aura of the congested and confusing family barriers. Her expectation from Jayant got passive but due to the fear of failure of her decision about marriage she doesn’t say a single word to anybody about the gap between her and Jayant. The present paper reflects Deshpande’s efforts of creating the fiction is coloured with the free force of will just like Tagorian concept of creative unity.

Self quest arising is one of the reasons of the gender discrimination. And the more questions arise of the self-identity establishment the more individual tries to catch the meaning of the self-identity. In Indian society there have been in majority the questions of the self-identities for girls in comparison of the male-child because of much importance to the male-child birth. The present research study of Vincent Aerathu focuses on the birth, growth and condition of the girl child in the Indian family in *The Girld is Mother: Girl Children in Shashi Deshpande’s Selected Novels* in the book *Critical Studies on Contemporary Indian English Women Writers*. In the Indian society the girl child is under the watchful eye of the parents, with the purpose of giving her new master who should find her capable enough to fulfil his expectations. The girl is taught that the greatest ambition of her life is marriage which is the ultimate goal of her life too. And the traditional virtues are inculcated in her to make her fit for the marriage market. This paper reflects that Shashi Deshpande sketched her protagonists coloured with the childhood colour in such a way that it impacts on their adult lives. Childhood plays the extreme crucial role in creating the personality. The present paper reflects that the socialization of the girl child includes many myths and legends, rituals and ceremonies and also psychological factors like the family and the girl’s place in it. Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* both father and mother suffer from gender bias. Her mother scolded her (Saru) all the time for the death of her son. Saru’s mother finds Saru responsible for the
death of Dhruva, her son, Saru’s brother. Her mind filled with the hatred for her mother. She hates her in such manner that she doesn’t want to be that everything was her mother wanted to make her. Saru reacts: “If you’re a woman, I don’t want to be one” (DHNT 63). Constant accusation breaks her confidence and that makes her incapable in having the meaningful relationship with her husband Manu too. Saru’s father doesn’t do any interference in Saru and her mother’s matters. Thus grew the importance of Soon and unimportance of Saru. And this distance actually grew wider and deep by the death of Dhruva. The childhood insecurity, the gender bias and constant sexual harassment by Manohar made her fed up from each relationship. She could be stable by her profession of a doctor. Jaya in That Long Silence also had restricted childhood. She was discouraged by listening the music of her own choice. Indu in Roots and Shadows also is a motherless child and under the rule of Akka. Her father brought Jaya to home and left her under the care of Atya and went on for his craze of the photography. For Indu her mother’s talk was blank. In concern of the gender bias Saru becomes the victim. There was always Puja on the birthday of Dhruba but nothing for Saru. In Roots And Shadows Indu’s father deserted her after the birth because she was girl and after her birth her mother died. Akka always kept her under the pressure that how the girl should sit, walk, speak, sleep, eat, serve the food, behave before the elders etc. Indu couldn’t bear that so she went against the wish of Akka and got marry with Jayant, the man of the different caste.

The sense of guilt and constant pressure crush the healthy growth of the women. Also such things make the women neurotic and this is what happens with Saru. Saru became the doctor and learnt for medicine by going against of her mother, at the same way Indu too breaks the bond of the female imperialism. She got marry with the man of her choice. She didn’t want the traditional marriage by choice of Akka and other family members. Though the deprived childhood, their education gives them the biggest opportunity to be stable in their life and strength to fight for the existence and self honour.

On the contrary the research study of P. Madhurima, A Feminist Perspective in The Novels of Shashi Deshpande from the book Literary Criticism in Indian English Literature, the research study highlights the inner landscape of the female protagonists in the novels of Shashi Deshpande. The Dark Holds No Terrors is a compelling story of
the female protagonists who is well educated and economically independent whose fight against all odds. Her crushed childhood and the disappointed relationship with her husband arose in her the self quest. The paper reflects the high sensibility of Sahshi Deshpande towards the female which in turn the explosion of the female psyche. Saru is two-in-one woman who is in day “a successful doctor” and at night “a terrified trapped animal” in the hands of her husband. Saru was constantly blamed by her mother for the death of her brother Dhruva. The shadows of this death and mother’s words follows her each moment which made her neurotic. She feels the echoes of her mother’s words: “You did it, you did this, you killed him”(p.173). This accusation hunts her like a ghost throughout her life and in the night, her husband attacks on her like monster for sexual passion in the night to prove Saru as weak and secondary. Saru became rebellious to hurt her mother. She choose the career of medicine and left the house and went to Bombay for further study also got marry with the man of her choice to injured her mother emotionally. Saru is the victim of the blatant hostility given by her mother. Manohar’s male dominant ego tries to crush her. The gap between her and her husband got wide. Saru is economical independent which made Manohar inferior and to make feel inferiority to Saru he attacked passionately to her in the night. Saru becomes expressive before her father which she never could be before her husband. Saru’s father gives her support emotionally and she decides to go back to her husband. Her returning back to her husband does not indicate submission to patriarchal edifice constructed by mother; rather she comes back to reconstruct her emotional role without deconstruction her gender identity. Sahshi Deshpande’s novels present a sensitive and delicate portrayal of Indian womanhood with a focus on the predicament of women and her concern in the life of her protagonists. The themes of her novels deal with the struggle of the Indian women in the tradition-bound, middle class, urban male-dominated society in India. That Long Silence is about suffering of an educated woman, focuses on the long predicament of Indian woman caused by the insensitivity and rigidity of her husband and making her a victim of circumstances. The novel attempts to portray the suffering and deprivations of women in general by presenting various characters as stereotyped representatives of traditional womanhood. The present paper shows that the Writer, Shashi Deshpande has drawn the Indian woman in every possible role through her novels. The present paper reflects the
sensibility of the woman writer towards the Indian women who don’t escape but get relief for sometimes and arise once again with new strength. The intricacies of a woman’s life within the family and outside can only be solved by herself when she learns to evaluate her worth and becomes conscious of herself as an individual.

In this research study of Usha Garg *The Quest for Identity, Reality and Spirituality in the Novels of Anita Desai* in the book *Post Independence Indian Writing in English*, the researcher focuses the quest for self in the novels of Anita Desai, which depicts the Indian woman who are highly educated, middle class and crushed under the hands of the social belief and the traditionalism. They are expected to be moulded in blind tradition but they can’t, even they don’t. Anita Desai has more concerned with the portrayal of inner reality than with the outer life. Anita Desai has highlighted her female protagonists with high sensitivity who live in the rigid and highly socialised families where they struggle to be stabled and established their own identity. The quest for identity, reality and spirituality is abundantly displayed in the novels of Anita Desai. The present paper focuses the remarkable writing style of Anita Desai is that, she explores the deep recesses of human mind and the inner world of the Indian woman through her characters. All her characters are constantly struggling against individuals against social environment or even against their own inner selves. Being a woman, Desai realises the feminine sensitivity more intensely. The ‘Cry’ represents and reminds us of the suffering of human life. It’s the ecstasy of human life. Maya, the female protagonist of the novel *Cry, The Peacock* cries deadly for the sensitive urge. Her soul cries bitterly. Her poignant cry reflects her passionate urge for physical love from her husband. But her husband is cold in approach. Maya takes several issues for the discussion again and again which shows her desire for freedom. Gautam is twice elder than her in age, cold in action and insensitive in approach. He keeps himself detached from materialistic worldly desires and dry regarding passion of life. The constant injured feelings of Maya turn her violent. The continuous inner dilemma, and constant inner struggle makes Maya disturb that she can’t get relief from it. The deep heaviness, unsolved desires made her extremely restless. She wants where and why exactly she is? Anita Desai focused on the inner psyche of the woman through the female protagonists who are largely representation of the human psyche. Desai’s writing highlights that women are also the important strata of the society.
as well as of the family they should not be ignored, as they are not subsidiary but the better partner in any work, any condition, any situation and at any way of the life.

Anita Sharma presents in her article, *Anita Desai’s Cry the Peacock : A Manifesto of Female Predicament* and focuses on the character of Maya, as the symbol of the Indian women’s predicament regarding the identity. Women’s identity is established with the birth. First, in father’s family, then in husband’s family and at last in son’s family. The element of dependency is written in the destiny of women. It means she has to be dependent throughout the whole life on one shoulder to another. After the death of the mother Maya has got the biggest support of her father Rai Sahib, then her father found the shadow support of him for Maya, is Gautam after the marriage. She was kept in habit of living the secure life with care and protective atmosphere. She was considered as the innocent child though with the age and grown body. She was fulfilled by every materialistic need what she desired and kept silent to speak anything or to express. But she gets fail against the silence and non-approach of Gautam towards her emotions and sensitivity. Maya is the motherless child and grown up so pampered by the father but she was addressed by her husband as the spoilt child of the father. Maya is the example of the strong desire of the self assertion, struggle against the societal odds and lament on the loss of the self. In her father’s house her being each moment under the concentration makes her insecure before the lake of attention of her husband Gautam. She feels suffocation when she was expected to love the certain kind of the life, that’s the life of the mature married woman. She was expected to be the readymade product of fetching the responsibilities in the married life. She faces the high burden of the responsibilities which she neither imagined nor expected to fulfill with such maturity. She can’t accept the gloomy atmosphere. Hence she gets relieve from the tension psychologically by thinking how peacocks stamp their feet and strike beak against rock, and how they seize the snake to break its own pain. This affects her consciousness badly and she cries for the urgent outlet of her emotions. Her unconsciousness desire to kill her husband is a revenge reaction arising out of own basic frustrations – unhappy married life, fulfilled longing and reaction against the cold unresponsiveness of her husband towards her emotions and sensitivity. Ending of the life she finds as the ending of the deep traumas. She murders her husband and through this she experiences the relief. Unconsciously, she doesn’t feel
any repent or guilt for what she did but when she becomes conscious she feels great repents for what she did and she too commit suicide. Maya’s quest is the quest for the self identity in her married life. Anita Desai sketches the female portraits as the symbol of the Indian women who have to be dependent on their male partners and who are considered as they have lack of identity. What the life they have to live is under the shade of the masculine power only. Maya had that growth under the shade of her father but she can face that rule with love, compassion and care but not by force. She finds the force and constant pressure under the shade of Gautam which she can’t tolerate. Maya feels tortured by the negligence and loneliness. Certainly the novel is also about the secondary characters like, Nila, Pom, Leila, the mother reflect the women subjugation and struggle for identity in the Indian families.

The traditional bond restricts the foot of women to walk forward in the path of progress. The present research study of Devika Ramana *The Dark Holds No Terrors: A postcolonial Reading* focuses on the post colonial transition in women’s role in the family, in the society, in the literary field too. In the Pre - Vedic era the women enjoyed the high respectable status and offered good freedom for literary creation. In the post-colonial era when the women are educated and having economical freedom they are living the life with full of restrictions and told untold bondages. Indian women are kept under the constant pressure of living and proving the ideal life. Marriage is the social means that society uses to ensure female subjugation and the institution of marriage, is clearly camouflaged by sanctity only to ensure male domination and to prevent any questioning by women. Expectation of being the ideal mother and wife still is reflected in the image of the women in the family as well as in the society.

Women writers’ awareness and their representation of the women through their works provided the present picture of the women. The researcher has tried to present the reflection of the novels of Shashi Deshpande in which we can find the women protagonists who are highly educated, Doctor, Journalist, writer etc. Yet they become the victim of the patriarchal society. They suffer and silent. They are expected to be the ideal form of woman of the ancient time who bear everything but don’t even get freedom to speak. Jaya from *That Long Silence* was forced to bear the wrong works but not allowed to speak. In the beginning of the marriage life she expressed what she didn’t like but it
started to hurt Mohan and gradually she stopped to say anything. She started to be silent and face everything silently. Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* faces the wild appearance of her husband regarding sex. Her husband who suffered from the inferiority in concern of the designation in comparison with Saru, tried to make Saru, to feel the inferiority and the secondary weak female during the night time. In *Roots And Shadows*, there has been female domination. Indu the motherless child was grown and brought up by the strict Brahmin family of her father. She was living under the constant watch of Akka, her father’s sister. Akka tries to keep Indu under so much restrictions and bondages where Indu feels suffocation and passes through the endless traumas. Also Indu is highly educated she was unaccepted by her family when she got love marriage with Jayant, other than her caste and reputation. Sahshi Deshpande has presented the female protagonist under the impact of education. They pass through the temporal escaping but soon they come in to their circle again to fight for existence with double strength. They get the power of get back with the force of self introspection.

Feminine sensibility is much vital issue in the Indian society which is always ignored to be taken seriously. It is the male-female feminist writers who have focused the light over and made it to thinkable and applicable to think about the individuality of the women in the Indin society as in the comparison of males. Bilquees Dar has focused over *Feminine Sensibility In Anita Desai’s Cry, The Peacock* by drawing the critical attention of Anita Desai, towards the condition of the women. She is considered as the most pioneer feminist writer in India related to the feminine issues. She has exposed the psychological world of the women. Her fictions are mainly dealt with the feminine sensibilities and her themes are innovative, mostly about miserable plight of women suffering under their insensitive and irresponsible husbands, fathers, brothers towards their sensibilities.

The female protagonists of Anita Desai suffer from loneliness. They are dissatisfied with their present life. She challenges the prevalent version of Indian women’s stereotypical life by subverting their quest for fulfilment with an intense dissatisfaction with the family system hence a result appears as unsatisfied ego. Desai’s protagonists are in search of their self-fulfilment of the emptiness. They try to build the healthy ties between them and parents, sibling, friends and yet remain incomplete. Desai
has created a feminist discourse of literary writing showing signs of a seething discontentment, hatred for the patriarchal norms of the civilized human existence, aspiration for liberation from societal and traditional family norms made compulsory for their acceptable existence in the mainstream male dominated society. Most of her characters are deeply in search of self- authenticity, self- establishment, cry for independent corner in the family, own corner of the desire fulfilment. She focused on the women characters usually hunted by peculiar sense of doom, so withdraw themselves into a sequestered world of their own and become neurotic, self-destructive and unhappy. They escape for the temporal time and again reappear by certain clarity of self-establishing themselves.

P.C. Prem writes in his research *A Woman’s Areas of Conflicts and Agonies in Anita Desai’s ‘Where Shall We Go This Summer?’* in the book *A Critical Handbook of Indian English Literature* about *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* – is novel about the hurt psyche of a female protagonist Sita by her open revolt regarding fifth pregnancy. Sita, the main protagonist who symbolizes the ideal class Indian woman’s predicament that she finds her exact place in the life, life of her husband, life of children and life of her own. Middle class Indian women have been passed through the imagination of being the idealistic who are made up the idealistic form of woman as was ‘Sita’ of ‘Ramayana’. She has to feel her womb with various secrets, pain, woes, pathos, untold and suppressed voices along with the baby in her womb. Sita is the fifth time expected mother who is going to give birth to a child fifth time. She genuinely realizes the arrival of fifth child as burden and pain. For her, children are the form of pessimism. Sita wants to give meaning to her life. Sita symbolizes those thousands of Indian women who don’t have right to give birth to the child by their wish but become the part of a sexual activity only. Patriarchy has nothing to do with their unbound limitles pain of delivering the child. It is found that this novel reflects the powerful conflict of Sita’s mind. The unescapism leads her to the condition of madness. She loves a child but does not want to give birth in the cruel world what she observes. Sita doesn’t belong to any simplicity of mind like, Moses, Miriam and Joseph but often penetrates into the complexity of life. The present research depicts that Anita Desai couldn’t find the better perspective of the life for Sita in the novel. It manipulated the sad defeat and somehow ending of the well characterization.
Image of womanhood is the issue of most feminine studies. In this present study of Medha Sachdev, *Feminine Psyche in Shashi Deshpande’s ‘The Dark Holds No Terrors*, from the Book *A Critical Handbook of Indian English Literature* in which the researcher enlightens about the image of the womanhood. It has been focused here the viewpoint of Shashi Deshpande that “women in this country are frustrated in many ways”. This novel reflects especially the gender bias treatment consciously and unconsciously ever put in to the treatment in the typical Indian families by male and female. The research shows the strong demand of Saru’s soul for liberation from the accusation of her brother’s death by her mother. She tries to set up herself in study, career, earning. She wants her place of respect. She got fed up by constant ignorance. The single accusation of her mother about the death of Dhruva leads her into darkest corner of her soul. Saru is the woman who has the respective status as a doctor but her husband made her realize that still she is a woman who has to bow down before him in the night. Though woman achieves the highest designation, she is still the secondary and weak sex before the males, that has been treated by her husband Manohar. Saru wants to get rid out of this but this constantly follows her from childhood to marriage life. Feeling of inferiority in Manu’s state of mind arose the image of ‘Night mare’ in Saru’s life from which she gets fear. The dark shadow isn’t vanished even after the marriage, from her life. Marital life where the women get respectable stance is typical view of the Indian people had been turned as the constant terror and trauma for Saru. The present paper has focused the Vedic philosophy too about the women’s respectable stand in comparing of Saru’s terror in the life.

Regarding the woman predicament, research of S. Kanitha in the article depicts *Indian Feminism in Shashi Deshpande’s The Dark Holds No Terrors* from the book *Contemporary Indian Woman Novelists in English*, reflects the experiences of Shashi Deshpande’s isolation as a woman which came as women predicament in her writing, as a writer. Deshpande expressed that writing is no one’s possessions. Women too can express themselves better way through their writing. In her essay she viewed about being a feminist in the essay called ‘The Globalization of Literature’, that “It took me years to say even to myself” “I am feminist”. It has been reflected that Shashi Deshpande’s view is that it was culmination of a voyage that began in herself and went on to the ocean of
women’s place in the world. The novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* narrates that Saru emerges from the conflict to gain an individual identity because she accepts the responsibility of her life and doesn’t want to escape as she did in past. She tries to prove herself a capable woman to obtain her freedom and self-identity. She is the symbol of those Indian girls who live in constant fear and under male-female domination. Such girls get fear for being hated and rejected by everyone who can’t tolerate to see them progressing. Saru became silent and passive. Saru’s father couldn’t raise the voice against his wife but he advices Saru to face the situation and tell everything to her husband what is wrong. Saru confessed before her father that she hated Dhruva, her mother as well as her husband because she finds she was nowhere with them. Her father makes her clear about the death of Dhruva and also about her mother’s bias while in case of her husband he insists her not to escape but face him and tell him what does she feel. Saru stands as a model Indian feminism who understands that her problems are raised by the patriarchal society, male-female domination and gender discriminations. Saru believes in insatiable love bondage between man and woman than sex.

Marital discord is one of the noticeable theme in the feministic literature related male-female. The present research of Satendra Kumar in his article *Shashi Deshpnade’s That Long Silence Sharing The Common Bed But Not The Common Thought* from the book *Sahitya Akademi Award Winning English Novels* shows Jaya and Mohan’s marriage life determined by social taboos in which the whole autonomy resides in the hands of Mohan, and Jaya was left as a shadow her husband. In retrospection Jaya recalls the terrible death of Vimla and Kusum as the victim of the blind socialism and Jeeja is another typical example of the domestic exploitation. In life of Kusum, Vimla and Jeeja there is no space for emotional identification but for practical adjustment only. Though Jeeja faced such oppression, she is traditional follower of her husband’s footsteps. Mukta, Jaya’s neighbour, lost her husband, does numerous fast and hardly eat her normal food. Vanita Mami offers numerous fasts in faith of blessings of the child. Number of the female characters suffered silently who face numbers of inner conflicts. The inner conscience is arisen in Jaya and she decides to break the silence. She decides to be voiced and not to be passive. Shashi Deshpande records the silence of the women but reaction of
the ‘cultured and the educated women’ who seek the worth in relationship beyond the periphery of the conventional ideology.

On the issue of female identity in accordance with Judith Kegan Gardiner in his research *On Female Identity and Writing by Women* in *Critical Inquiry, Writing and Sexual Difference*. Chicago journal the writer presents the female identity is dependent on their mothers from the childhood. It is easy for them to acquire that rather than the independent identity. The girl creates her identity positively like her mother and she has to prepare herself in such a way that she can re-create mother-infant symbiosis when she herself will be the mother. Independence and autonomy are harder for women to attain. If we connect this issue of gender identity dependency in ‘The Dark Holds No Terrors’ of Shashi Deshpande, Saru is expected and forced by her mother to be socialized from the very birth as a girl. She is by forced taught to be inferior and timid in terms of being a well mannered girl from the childhood in comparison of Dhruva, her younger brother. While in *Roots And Shadows*, Indu is by forced kept under the female domination and restriction to be ideal girl who should be ready till the age of marriage.

On the contrary in the article of Anita Myles, *Ch- III, Anita Desai* from the book *Feminism and the Post-modern Indian Women Novelists in English* depicts the style of Anita Desai to design the extreme disturbed psyche of the Indian women. Myles researched that Anita Desai has mainly focused on the alienation and isolation of the Indian women who are expected the most from the family and society and least fulfilled related to desire by the family and society. In *Cry, The Peacock* it could be found that Maya is the hypersensitive woman. She is expected by Gautam to be idealistic, patient, submissive, traditional, tolerant, compromising and undemanding. Maya becomes like that but when she realizes that her physical and emotional needs are not fulfilled and without attention of Gautam she becomes impatient and intolerant. She becomes demanding and express herself in revolting tone. She gets very disturbed, besides the prophecy of the death made her scared regarding the fourth year of the marriage, either her death or her husband’s death, and she loves the life, she doesn’t want to die. She can’t even tolerate the life without Gautam too. But in the unconscious temper she pushed Gautam from the terrace and after guilt conscience she commits suicide too. *Cry, The Peacock* is the saga of the destructive love where misunderstanding, mistrust and uncompromising attitude leads the marital discord. Tragedy of Maya occurred because
she needed the safety and security in form of total attention of Gautam. She doesn’t like to be ignored and her revolting expression through arguments is addressed by Gautam as ‘Neurotic’ and ‘Mad woman’. Maya’s tragic end is due to her lake of love the life independently, without support and her negative attitude towards the life. While Gutam’s mother is strong will power lady and Nila is positive attitude woman even after the divorce. If we focus over the research article of K. Prema in Breaking the Silence: Compromise or Confrontation? A Study of Shashi Deshpande’s That Long Silence from the book Post-Modern Indian Women Novelists in English depicts that Shashi Deshpande has given the honest portrayal of a woman’s fears, suffering and disappointment. Besides she reveals the close doors of the self-identity and self-respect through the various oppression levels in the family and society. She brings the boiling, broiling and burning problems of marital life. In India and Indian society marriage is regarded as *summum bonum* of woman’s life but in hidden ways many of the ways it proves as the weapon to kill the individuality and freedom of the women. In Roots and Shadows, Shashi Deshpande expresses the view regarding the marital discord in words of Hemant that: “A Trap? Or a cage? Maybe the comic strip version of marriage...” (RS 63) reflects the harsh feelings in marriage. Here the focus is on the uninterested bond between the two persons in marriage without deep instincts where male-female both feel suffocation and trapped by the marital bondage having the feelings of being custodian.

1.1.1.8 Meaning of the Research

- The meaning of the research is focus on the ‘Saga of the Voyage’. The ‘Voyage’ of search for ‘Self’. It’s a ‘Voyage’ of the Indian woman in the typical Indian Patriarchal society in search for self, struggle for achieving the individual freedom, self-identity and self-respect which ultimately ends up by strong determination of achieving the self creation by facing any challenges in life. The remarkable urge of research dictates that the women pass though the mental traumas and ultimately they reject to become the part of the blind socialism. They are no more ready to share their existence in social problems or socialistic beliefs but prove themselves as independent human.
1.1.1.9 Objectives of the Proposed study

- The first and foremost objective of this research study is to focus on the educated, middle class working women and housewives’ condition in the Indian family, society and in the working fields, their struggle and achievement of the self worth as an individual.


- The further rational objective is to find out the feminist males, their approach towards women identity and their support to the women as the individuals to create their self image by facing the challenges after long term mental traumas in life rather than escaping and by the support of their own inner strength.

- The creation of self image and re-appearance as ‘New Woman’, ‘Self-Independent’ and ‘Self-Liberated Woman’ before the obstacles without any support.

1.1.1.10 Importance/Rationale of Proposed Investigation/Research

- The rational purpose of the research study is that the research study can be used for the post doctoral study in the field of ‘Feminism’ or ‘Comparative Study’ by adding more novels or more than two women writers.

- It inspires for ‘Study of Comparison’ of the works of the women novelists.

- This research study motivates the ‘Translation Study’ in Indian English Literature.

- The purpose of the research study is to focus on the effort of the two women writers to present the feminine sensibility.
The rational purpose of this research study is to focus on, yet the critical condition of the ‘Girl Child’ even if the girls are much more ‘educated’ and strongly capable enough to ‘earn the bread’ for family. They don’t need the support of the male partners to hold them in the critical condition but they struggle by their own and fight to win. And ultimately they achieve the victory of self stability called balance in the present life.

This research study is an important enlightenment on the path of those Indian women who live in the modern era and they are modern though they pass through the humiliation of male- female in family as well as in the career and working fields. Patriarchal society makes them realize constantly to be secondary and weak sex, their untold problems, their adjustments and inner conflicts ultimately tells the story of their silent submission to the patriarchal society.

The name worthy purpose of the research study is to focus on the Feminist males against Patriarchal males in form of brothers, lovers, cousins, fathers, uncles who understand women and their roles. They play supporting role for the female protagonists. They motivate them to face the challenges without escaping.

1.1.1.11 Research Methodology

The research is purely of qualititative and non-empirical in nature.

1.1.1.12 Interdisciplinary Relevance

- Can be useful as ‘Translation Study’, ‘Comparative Study’ as well as ‘Study of Comparison’.
- It motivates the ‘Feministic study’.
- It inspires the ‘Socialistic Study’ regarding Indian families.
1.1.1.13 Chapter Scheme

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the first chapter the researcher has given the detail *Introduction* of the research study.

Chapter 2: Contribution of the two Women Novelists to Indian Writing in English

In the second chapter, the researcher has focused on the contribution of the two women novelists Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai in Indian Writing in English.

Chapter 3: Shashi Deshpande’s Selected Novels: Textual Summary & Critical Discussion

In the third chapter, the researcher has focused on the textual summary of the novels of Shashi Deshpande along with the critical discussion.

Chapter 4: Anita Desai’s Selected Novels: Textual Summary & Critical Discussion

In the fourth chapter the researcher has focused on the textual summary of the novels of Anita Desai along with the critical discussion.

Chapter 5: Comparison of the Works of both the Women Novelists

In the fifth Chapter the researcher has focused on the comparison of both the Woman novelists’ works along with the critical discussion.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In the sixth chapter the researcher has given the conclusion.

At last the thesis includes Limitations of the research study, Scope of the future study, Bibliography, Appendix, List of publications and Conference details.
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