

Synopsis

Aim:

The thesis entitled Predicament of Females- A study in the works of Sudha Murthy and Shashideshpande aims at examining in general the predicaments of women in the society and in particular how some try to overcome the predicaments to prove their individuality and flourish themselves in the field that they choose. The steps that they take to overcome these predicaments pave the way for the future women to empower themselves.

Objective:

This research tries to establish that women are not only for worshipping, to be considered a symbol of sobriety but also they are the icons of strength and have the potential to fight against cultural and social predicaments to change the darkness of the women's life be the bright and to have self satisfaction.

Methodology:

This study shows the three different types of predicaments

1. Social
2. Family
3. Girl child

This research probes into Indian women's predicament with respect to culture and society. This tries to throw light on the strategies in feminist practice in resolving key issues.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Indian writing in English has established a wide range of literature as it has even given its space for women writings. Women writers in India have a major role in moulding the literary work in Indian society. They portray the sensible and sensitive issues which happen in and around women in the society. The women novelists portray their characters on the novel as bold and sensible characters which make the readers to think and interpret their life with the imaginative characters in the novel. Women relationship to their surroundings, their society, their men, their children and their family are clearly seen through their behavior towards them in the novel. Indian women novelists have given a new dimension to the Indian literature.

Woman writers have brought a change in the society as they have pushed all the taboos aside and presented it boldly in their novels. The issues of the middle class Indian women are boldly revealed by the characters in the novel. The undergoing pressures in the minds of the woman and the pains of the silent sufferers are clearly seen through the characters in the novel. The problems faced by the women in the society as well as in the family are brought into lime light and even given a solution for all their sufferings in the dominated society. The bold and courageous decisions taken by the women bring a change in the minds of the readers as they boldly take a step ahead in their life to prove their identity.

The predicament of woman in her life is seen from her birth till her last breath as she is being under the control of the dominated people. She obeys the orders as well as sacrifices the desire of herself and accepts the demands of the people in her family. The oppression of her individuality, domination, thirst for identity, isolation, self analyzing are the major problems woman face in her life. The control of the family values and the norms of the culture bring a woman in a battle as she fights hard between her desire and the values. The strong courageous woman is brought into circumstances as they are pulled back by the emotional bonds. The woman is either stopped by the domination of the men in the family or by the responsibility in the family

Many Indian Women Writers have focused on the themes of issues in the life of women in the Indian middle class society. They have tried their best in portraying the reality of the women's life in the patriarchal society. The problems they focus are based on the lives of the women and their own experiences they overcome in their past life or in the present scenario. The predicament in the life of the women in the patriarchal society is clearly revealed through the writings of many women writers in their novels. The works of many women writers have brought a drastic change in the lives of many women in the society. Women in the society have taken a step ahead in proving her talent with her own identity which gained her a respect.

The problems of women in their life are being focused as they are the mere sufferers in the society. The men in the patriarchal society rule the women in the family as they are known as the superior power in the dominated society. The women are treated like a slave in the hands of the superiors as they are kept under the control of the men as well as the elderly woman in the family. The women are treated like a doll as she has to obey and accept all the demands given by the men in the family. Women from their birth are controlled by the elders and the men in the family as well as in the society.

The present thesis aims at bringing out the mental and the inner sufferings of the women in the family as well as in the society. It mainly focuses on the problems of Indian middle class women in their lives which lead them to be a silent sufferer throughout their life. It mainly reveals the issues faced by the women in the family as well as in the society and also about the new women who overcome the struggles with their bold and courageous thoughts. The problems they undergo in their life and the obstacles they face boldly are been analyzed with the novels chosen for the study. This thesis is an attempt to portray the life of women who struggle hard for their living and how they boldly manage themselves to prove themselves beyond many challenges in the male dominated society as depicted in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy.

The thesis has analyzed the works of Shashi Deshpande such as *That Long Silence*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Roots and Shadows* and Sudha Murthy's novels such as *Mahashweta* and *Dollar Bahu*. The research has been focused on the sufferings of women in the novels through the characters in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy.

The research is done on the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy. The novels that are selected for the research are *That Long Silence*, *Roots and Shadows*, *Dark Holds No Terror* by Deshpande and Sudha Murthy's *Dollar Bahu* and *Mahashweta*. All the five novels have been analyzed through the characters' behavior and actions in their life. The entire focus is based on the life of women in the novels of Deshpande and Murthy. The issues the women in the society and the obstacles they overcome are the main theme that has been focused with the selected novels that have been chosen for the study. The women and the issues around them like isolation, domination, inferior, quest for identity and thirst for freedom are some aspects that have been dealt with.

The thesis is divided into five chapters first is the Introduction and the last is the summation. "Family Predicament" is the second chapter which discusses about the issues of woman who faces lots of physical and mental trauma in their own family which revolves around the members in their family as well as in the society. Their sufferings and the inner pain of the protagonist is seen through the pressure she handles silently with a loud pain in it. But still she moves on in her life. This novel mainly portrays a picture of Indian woman who is sensible, educated and economically independent and yet they are still seen as an object in the minds of patriarchies. With the help of their education and their mental power they have thrown off their conditioning and the issues of oppression which makes them lose hope in their life.

The third chapter entitled "Social Predicament" discusses about the issues of women in the society which creates an imbalance in their family relationships. The mental psyche the women face in their relationships are revealed through their sufferings and sacrifices. The woman from being a silent sufferer to a woman of great resource is analyzed with the selected novels. "Girl Children Predicament" is the fourth chapter which discloses about the predicaments of girl children in the family. The issues of balancing the responsibilities of both career life and the family life have been discussed with the characters in the novel. The women's quest for identity and freedom is the main issue that has been analyzed with the help of the selected novels that are taken for the study.

Fourth Chapter "Girl Children Predicament" is an effort that tries to explain how the different aspects of woman face different issues in the society because of their gender and their status. The pity state of woman in the family as well as their inner self is revealed through their

sufferings. Their inner pain and their silence play a major role in their family as it clearly define their nature of thought about their life. The frustrations, longing, hope and promises make them to realize their true reality of their life and people around them. The problems they face and the ignorance they overcome and the partiality they undergo are all discussed with the help of the selected novels.

Thus five novels such as *That Long Silence*, *Roots and Shadows*, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Mahaswetha* and *Dollar Bahu* are taken for the study. The selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy are taken for the analysis of this research and it tries to explain the difference in characters gender problems of domination, longing for freedom, thirst for self respect, acceptance and the control of traditions towards the woman, with the portrayal of women characters in the select novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy.

Chapter 2

Family Predicament

Shashi Deshpande in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* portrays the reality of the Indian Woman who is sensible, educated, bold and courageous in leading her life independently but yet she is totally different when compared to her earlier life where she was full-time home maker, a woman who followed the rules and regulations even after many differences in her life, a perfect woman with lots of responsibilities of taking care of others in spite of her health conditions. The image of women is totally described by the patriarchal society by showing their suffering side of their life as their permanent destiny. The Protagonists are self oriented and that's why they mostly ignore the 'feminine' characteristics which might affect her way in proving their Self towards Self – discovery after series of difficulty in their life.

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, the author analyses the problems of the professional woman's experience in her life, the conflicts, marital stress, fatigue and above all the sexual harassment from her husband. In the preface the words reflect the pain and the predicament of Indian women.

The novel revolves around the struggle of a woman who balances herself between the role in the family and in the society. In Indian patriarchal society a woman has to face all the issues as a silent sufferer as it is also a custom for a woman to hide her feelings which might relate to her character. The Protagonist Sarita alias Saru in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* shows the real life of a woman who in daytime proves herself as a career oriented woman but at night she is not even treated as a woman instead she is mere an animal in hands of her husband.

Chapter 3

Social Predicament

In this chapter the novels of Shashi Deshpande's *Roots and Shadows* and *That Long Silence* are chosen for the study. She reveals the life of the protagonists to show the society the actual truth they are going through as a silent sufferer. Her themes are mostly concerned with the struggle of women in the Indian middle class society such as women's frustration, guilt, fear, loss, loneliness and death. She is well versed in giving the readers valuable experience and her understanding of the relationships in the family and in the society. She clearly gives us the picture of the family bond and the issues of women who are struck by the bonding.

In the novel *Roots and Shadows*, Shashi has clearly given the image of woman who is seen as the silent sufferer. The theme of this novel is 'Family bond'. In this novel the author reveals the search of an individual who goes in search of one's roots for solace. She even tells us that a individual cannot find peace in isolation instead it is interconnected.

The major theme of the novel is the predicament of woman where the novel tries to explore the range of one's own sensibility without the influence of any masculine pattern and to feel confident in one's own decision and values. The predicament of Indhu portrays the inner conflicts of woman to express and explore their real self to the society. Indhu the protagonist of the novel *Roots and Shadows* represents a modern woman who faces the conflicts and problems of fusing traditional values and modernity. Deshpande clearly tells the true reality of women's determination to fight back against the obstacles around her in order to face the society. She wants the women to taste the freedom of self in order to ignore all kinds of frustrations and

depressions in her slavery life. She wants her women characters to be bold and courageous in their life without depending on others.

The next novel for study is Deshpande's *That Long Silence* that narrates the protagonist Jaya disillusion in her marriage and her interpersonal relationships. The novel explores the predicament of the protagonist Jaya and her attempts to have an identity out of her depression to rediscover herself. The rights of woman in both family and society are clearly shown through the obstacles Jaya faces in her life. The experience and the quest for having an identity is seen through her brave decisions she takes in her life. Our society blindly makes the people to believe that especially the people who blindly follow the traditions and customs, that marriage is a vital essence of woman's life without which her life will become meaningless and unfortunate for the rest of her life. Marriage is a process where the woman is being brought under control.

The author creates a space for the woman in the society where various voices find utterance breaking the long silence of ages. The novel present the aspects of woman's experience in the society as well as in the family who attempts to give voices to the silent sufferer and the real meaning of their silence. The different characters in the novel described by the author clearly tell us how a woman of any age is being treated like a slave and beaten to death for fulfilling the man's desires. The silence of many women in the novel has revealed their predicament in their life which has no solutions other than remain silent forever in their life time.

In this novel, Deshpande describes the sensitivity of women's issues in their life which plays a major role in the society. The story revolves around the characters Jaya and her husband Mohan. The novel starts with Mohan, an engineer, in his pursuit of prestige has indulged in malpractices and has a fear of losing his job. He therefore decides to leave the place and moves with his wife Jaya to stay at their flat at Dadar, where they start their early married life. She feels

very depressed about her state and her husband who has lost his status and dignity. She even feels lost because of her husband's fault for which even her identity is lost for no reason other than being his wife.

Chapter 4

Girl Children Predicament

In this chapter an effort is taken to explain how the different aspects of woman is being analyzed with the help of Sudha Murthy's selected novels *Mahashweta* and *Dollar Bahu* . The issues of woman in the family relationship and also in the society are being analyzed. The predicament of woman in the family is seen through the characters actions and behavior. Sudha Murthy not only discusses about the life of woman in the family but also issues related to the working woman in the society. The pity state of woman in the family as well as their inner self is revealed through their characters. Their inner pain and their silence play a major role in their family as it clearly define their nature of thought about their life. The frustrations, longing, hope and promises make them realize their true reality of their life and people around them.

In Sudha Murthy's novel *Mahashweta*, the story is about a young girl Anupama who suffers the plight of isolation because of her skin disease. She was earlier being appreciated and looked pretty for people but after the cause of the disease she was being alienated by the people who once were fond of her. The cause and effect of the disease has made her life look terrible as she has to face lots of issues in her life. The confusions in her life increased as the problem around her arises day by day. She was left helpless and even felt inferior at times to face the society as well as to the people around her. At the end it is clearly reveals the individual's self-exploration which comes not in a normal life but after experiencing many hard times in their life. An individual is being analyzed and self analyzed only after many problems and challenges in their life which they go through throughout their life.

Chapter 5

Summation

This study of the select novels of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy has led to certain findings and conclusions. This chapter aims at the final evaluation of Shashi Deshpande and Sudha Murthy's contribution to the psychological effects and the societal domination in the lives of women in the Indian middle class society.

The comparisons of Sudha Murthy and Shashi Deshpande women characters are mostly similar as they face the same issues in their lives. They protest for their identity, self respect and balancing their career and their family lives. In Deshpande and Murthy's novels we could see the women suffering are mostly the educated women who cannot accept the self destruction of their desire and thus take up the role of a new woman in the patriarchal society. They are bold, courageous and intelligent women who could balance the both family life and career life without any violence in the family.

Both the novelists have carved their views on the vast traditions of the Indian Women novelists. Sudha Murthy's novels are translated into English and different Indian languages. Shashi Deshpande has also been one of the prominent women writers in Indian English Literature. Their identities as modern novelists are mainly characterized by the social and psychological features of the human relationship prevalent in their novels. Both the novelists portray the women in the modern India, where they suffer and search for love, identity, happiness and fulfillment in life.

