



Journal Homepage: - www.journalijar.com

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/13604

DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/13604>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

MODERN WOMEN'S ASPIRATIONS IN SHASHI DESHPANDE "THE DARK HOLDS NO TERRORS"

Abha Pandey and Meeta Agrawal

Principal and Head, Department of English Government Mahakoshal Arts and Commerce College, Jabalpur
Department of Education St. Aloysius (Auto) College, Jabalpur.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 28 August 2021

Final Accepted: 30 September 2021

Published: October 2021

Key words:-

New Modern Woman, Male ego,
Aspiration, Ambitious, Gender
Discrimination, Transformation,
Dedication

Abstract

Shashi Deshpande in her novel has presented a realistic picture of the modern educated, intelligent middle class woman in the novel. The 'New Woman' is neither fully traditional nor fully modern. A new paradigms related to a woman's life came into existence i.e. tradition and modernity, economic dependence, self-assertion, aspiration and independent in life in her novel. The 'New Woman' in Deshpande's novel gets all types of rights in their life; hence they struggle a lot to get free from the traditional world and in quest for her own identity. The present paper is an attempt to analyze Shashi Deshpande's novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. The Methodology followed in the analysis is of comparative and contrast. Sarita is the main protagonist of the novel, who is modern emancipated middle-class educated woman in the novel. She plays different roles to achieve her goals and aspirations in her life through facing various traumas in the novel. An attempt has been made to highlight Deshpande's story "*The Dark Holds No Terror*" that allocates the educated women in all possible ways.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2021,. All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Women are integral part of the civilization. No society or country can ever progress without an active participation of women in its overall development. Although the place of women in society has differed culture to culture and from age to age, but they have never been considered equal to man. Indian English Literature has produced a galaxy of women writers touching various facets of women's life. Writers like Kamala Das touch the physical aspects of human relationships, Anita Desai's focuses on the psychological one in Bharti Mukherjee's novels, it is a question of identity. Shashi Deshpande has achieved a renowned name in the field of feminism in Indian English literature. She has achieved different prestigious awards for different novels. Women identity, status derives from their relation to the explicitly gendered categories of mothers, daughters and wives. The present study aims at evaluating Shashi Deshpande *The Dark Holds No Terrors* from the approach of women's identity and to fulfill their aspiration. Promilla Kapur, a sociologist analyses these changes.

"With a change in woman's personal status and social status has come a change in her way of thinking and feelings and the past half century has witnessed great changes in attitude towards sex, love and marriage." (336)

On the surface, the story of *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Sarita (saru), protagonist of the novel is a doctor, married to Manohar, she is a daughter of orthodox parents and a sister to deceased brother Dhruva. From the childhood, Sarita is

Corresponding Author:- Abha Pandey

Address:- Principal and Head, Department of English Government Mahakoshal Arts and Commerce College, Jabalpur Department of Education St. Aloysius (Auto) College, Jabalpur.

an archetypal example of a girl with a battered childhood. She was always ignored in favour of her brother Dhurva she was a victim of gender discrimination in Patriarchal society.

Her childhood has been damaged by her mother's preconceived notion. Even as a child Sarita remembers her mother's inclination for Dhurva only. She is always neglected and ignored. The whole novel is replete with such incidents showing a mother's grudge and gender bias towards her daughter. Sarita's mother Kamala shows irredeemable hostility towards her daughter and remarks biting "Why he's you die? Why are you alive, when he's dead (*Dark* 34). She is constantly reminded that she is a girl whose fate is to get married and to leave the parent house while her brother need not to do so.

Saru's mother vehemently opposed her higher studies for medicine not only due to financial problem but also for the fact that she did not approve women's independence. She is an authoritative woman, who did not want to break the chain of customs and traditions followed in the society she wanted to impose same traditions to her daughter. But Sarita rebel, as she opposed the culture to be followed in her life. There are different incidents and conversation between mother and daughter over skin tone center the notion that a girl doesn't belong to parental home.

Don't go out in the sun. You'll get even darker.

Who cares?

We have to care if you don't. We have to get you married.

I don't want to get married.

Will you live with us all your life?

Why not?

You can't.

And Dhruva?

He's different. He's a boy (*Dark* 45)

The girl being a responsibility and the boy assets become definitely in her mind, and the main objective of her life to get rid from her daughter to marry her. The question arises, why the daughter on the other hand gets the raw deal and all the negativity surfacing from the mother's bosom envelopes the poor girl all through her life. "To a woman, to be the mother of a son is the goal of womanhood" (*Image of Woman in the Indo-Anglian Novel*, Shriwadkar, 79.)" which itself a question on motherhood. As several moments had been recognized by Sarita when she arrives at parental house after a long break.

It is true that Kamala, an orthodox woman worshipped Tulsi for her husband's sake, but also dominated her husband a little bit. Gender peripheral existence, segregation, the antipathy between the sexes, patriarchal, socialization often leads to obsession in women. Kamala develops this attitude because she had a traumatic childhood. Her father becomes a sadhu and leaves his wife and their daughters to fend for themselves, which naturally became a burden for the helpless mother. Even the natural growing up is made shameful other incidents in the novel the first experience of menstruation is an awful one for young Sarita as her mother scares her with the facts of life instead of helping her cope with the new development.

She doesn't allow her "to enter her kitchen and puja room" (*Dark* 62), "she is sleeping on the straw mat" (*Dark* 62), she is made to eat out of a separate dish.

As a result, she embarks on a journey to prove something to her mother. She seizes every opportunity to stand against her mother whether it is education or marriage. When Sarita moves to Mumbai, joins a medical college and meets Manohar, this meeting culminates in the two falling in love and her marriage with Manohar (low caste) an eminent nature against her parents' wishes. Which itself proves her rebel nature and ambitious she achieves her goal and fulfills her aspirations at any cost.

But soon the ecstasy of the married life vanishes when Sarita being a wife transforms into sought after doctor as her profession. She makes her own identity and no longer is identity of her husband needed by her. Here, Manohar develops a sense of inferiority complex and feels humiliated on seeing the reaction of society to Sarita's superior position. He gets pleasure out of insulting his wife with sheer physical violence. "The hurting hands, the savage teeth, the monstrous assault of a horrible familiar body. And above me a face I could not recognize" (*Dark* 112)

Gloria Steinem, a radical feminist leader, confirms that patriarchy requires violence or the subliminal threat of violence in order to maintain itself... The most dangerous situation for a woman is not an unknown man in the street, or even the enemy in wartime but if a husband or lover in the isolation of their home. When Manohar forced to have sexual relation with Sarita it proves that the intimate partner often wants to control over you. But Sarita accepts this apart from their life silently, for the sake of the children, which proves her dedication towards her family. Sarita is a selfish and ambitious woman too, who had use of Boozie to settle her practice as to become a successful doctor. Yet, she took the advantage of her image as well as money too to fulfill her dreams this proves that she has the capacity to break the rules and regulation of the society.

The novel of Shashi Deshpande repeatedly challenges and questions the established assumptions about gender discrimination, male ego, determination and aspirations. It has been my endeavor to explore the evolution of the New Woman, defined as an urban and educated woman, who cast-offs her traditional role of living under the shade of her husband and tried, seeks to break the age-old silence by refusing to dance to the tune of her husband.

References:-

1. Kapur, Promilla. *The Changing Status of Working Women in India* (Delhi: Vikas 1974) P.366.
2. Deshpande, Shashi. *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1990.
3. Shriwadkar, Meena. *Image of Woman in the Indo-Anglian Novel*. New Delhi: Sterling, 1979.
4. https://www.azquotes.com/author/14070-Gloria_Steinem/tag/patriarchy.