

Chemistry of Mother Daughter Relationship In Shashi Deshpande's Novel 'The Dark Holds No Terror'- A Critical Study.

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ABSTRACT

'A force and autonomous being like all creatures – (a woman) find herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other.' 1

Mother daughter relationship has always been a matter of discussion as far Shashi Deshpande's creative ventures are concerned. Mother is depicted as a figure of solace for a child but Deshpande has a different opinion. She has not idealized mother up to the level of a Goddess, Durga or Laxmi as narrated by most of the feminist writers. She is portrayed in different colours and shades- having different human qualities. Her mother is full of capricious whims , slips slopes and guided by their blood calls. The impact of patriarchal society is embedded in the psyche of her fer female characters. Our society is full of paradoxes and mismatches. Females are considered to be the marginals in the house of father and husband as well. A woman is unable to decide her roots throughout her life. Consequently, a sense of insecurity looms over her leaving her insecure in her life. She wants to belong and this quest for identity becomes her unsatiated thirst. She wants to belong at any cost but a sense of insecurity envelops her. She is not only a sufferer of insecurity but also a breeder of insecurity. A girl remains deeply in the contact of mother most of the time. Therefore, she acquires all the insecurities and anxieties already acquired by her mother. In the novels of Deshpande women are trying to find out their new identities and they want to belong at any cost. Some women are product of social conditions in which they are living. This paper explores the relationship of the main protagonist Sarita with her mother Kamla in Deshpande's first novel The Dark Holds No Terrors (1980). The impact of patriarchy is amply visible even in the sacred relationship of mother and daughter. This affectionate bond takes the shape of heated controversy when the realities of life are faced. This interplay becomes the cause of changed relationships between beloved mother and caring daughter. The daughter seeks to explore this miraculous world with her own conditions but mother anxiety is innate as she has a lot of experience of the way of the world and she doesn't want to get her suffer at any cost.

Key Words –Daughter , Mother , Matriarchy , Freedom , compassion.

Shashi Deshpande explores the social world of many intricate relationships. In her novels many men and women live together, take journey in their respective lives. The feeling of neglect, doubt and anxiety thrust the characters in search of self-identity. This rigorous process of rediscovery is an onset of redefining contours to find their roles, position and relationships in this vast world. In the joint families the novelist presents the saga of three generations. She presents the modern Indian woman in her novels. She tries to explore the innermost of female creatures with great sympathy and as a keen observer she explores their anxieties, traumas and pangs of Indian twentieth century women. She advocates for their liberty and tries to raise the voice of marginalised society.

In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, mother daughter relationship is based on gender bias and aloofness where a daughter is begging for love and compassion. In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Sarita is the daughter of house tries to be loved. Her mother is very particular for the brother Dhruv and hate her own daughter Saru. This ignorance forces Sumi to take the path of rebel and this sense of ignorance is deep rooted in the psyche of Saru that she is unable to recover from this complex. She initiates hating herself. She says, "A kind of shame that engulfed me, making me want of rage, to scream against the fact that put me in the same class as my mother."²

In Shashi Deshpande's novels there has always been a heated controversy between mother and daughter and the mother is not a figure just like a Goddess. She is not an entity to be glorified for any purpose. The authoritative behaviour of her mother plunges her an awkward situation when she chooses his wrong life partner and ties to be loved by her husband. Saru, consequently enrages her mother as she always shatter the embedded convictions of her mother. Saru seems to be very rebellious when she challenges that Dhruv is permitted go out in the sun but being a girl, she is prohibited to go out in the sun as there is a fear of getting darker

. "And Dhruv?"

"He is a different. He is a boy."

It is a classic case of gender bias and discrimination where a boy is kept on upper hand in the patriarchal society and a girl is considered a fair and weak sex. Role of a mother always be filled with a sense of equality as she has suffered a lot for being a proud mother after conceiving. When a mother is not guided by the worldly wisdom of equality between the girl and a son the manifestation results in peril. In true sense a mother is said to be a friend, guide, counselor and a torch bearer to a girl.

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* the main focus is laid on Dhruv and only Dhruv seems to be the main cause of mother's existence. On the other hand, Saru is a liability and burden heavy to bear for a long time. The death of Dhruv comes like a bolt from the blues. Saru is held responsible for his death and the mother lashes at her saying why are you alive when he is dead. The extreme of intensity surpasses the limits when the mother disowns her from the property. The enmity is increased as there are no speaking terms between the mother and daughter. Saru is sailing on a rudderless boat without any sea sore and destination. This struggle is waged by Saru throughout her life in search of love and care. She wanted to be loved and cared but in vain. She was not even forgiven by her mother.

There is a sense of envy in her mind against Saru as she does not have any link with her mother. A well-known writer has written beautifully that “daughter are curse with indefinite memory. God has given girls to be committed for sins”. Saru is surprised that her mother died peacefully in spite of so many wrong doings with her daughter. There is always a sense of communication gap, a rift of personal thinking and overall values and conventions which forced the mother and daughter to stray from each other. There is always an innate regret in her mind that her mother might have not gotten solace and peace in heavenly abode.

Shashi Dedhpande has always covered the latest themes in her creative ventures to highlight the existing social scenario. In her another novel Roots and Shadows, Indu has been main cause of series of problems in the life. Indu is a child who is brought up without a mother. There is a joint family to look after her, full of uncles and aunts. She has a father who is a prophet. The dictator Akka, a widow is the head of family, treats every member with iron hand. Indu puts a question on the established rules and authority. She wants to be loved and cared and admired. But the male members are always admired and loved. Indu remains in search of love, compassion and sympathy and ultimately she fulfills this desire in the lap of Jayant. This act is wrong and unacceptable in the eyes of her family members especially Akka. Indu deserts from her house.

Saru and Indu has been rebellious to their families but there is an utter urge of belongingness and warmth and security from the family. Both are returned to their family back and try to seek new meaning of their existence. Environment of family is so suffocated and caged that a girl wants to explore true freedom in the outer world. Ultimately she embraces the lap of Jayant who seems to be protective and caring for her. With the passage of time the situation changes and the earlier taken decision proves but the outcome is self-created problem.

Deshpande has always tried to break the shackles of imposed matriarchal society to a large extent. She says, “Being a mother, daughter, wife is important for a woman but this is not all and end all of her existence.” A woman cannot be worshipped and idealized as a Goddess. She is not that Savitri who would sacrifice her life for the sake of her husband Satyawant even after his death. Her characters ask questions with great curiosity without any hesitation and consequence. They also enjoy self-consciousness and fight for their individual rights. Mother daughter relationship in the novels of Deshpande has been bitter but mother plays most important role in their lives. She says that mother daughter relationship is very important in the life of a lady and they should not fight. It is a relation of love, compassion and forgiveness where they should grow amicably. Her heroines are in search of self and identity and full of vigour and vitality. They follow their self-made course of action. The last line of Dark Holds No Terrors is quite important to sum up the Research paper:

**You are your own refuge;
This refuge is hard to achieve**

REFERENCES

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2. **Shashi Deshpande. The Dark Holds No Terrors. Penguin Books India Ltd. 1990**
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