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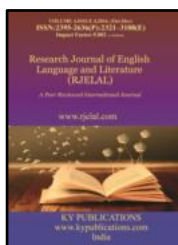
PORTRAYAL OF PROTAGONISTS IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S NOVEL "DARK HOLDS NO TERROR" AND "THAT LONG SILENCE"

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ABSTRACT

Shashi Deshpande is an award winning Indian novelist. In her writings she has tried to depict the condition and problems of the women in the society. She explores the inner conflict existing in a women and how she adjusts to the surroundings, which are not according to her wishes. In her novel "Dark Holds No Terror" the protagonist called Sarita who was a well positioned woman in the society but she was badly treated by her husband because of his inferiority complex. In her other novel, "That Long Silence" – Jaya the protagonist is not living for her own, she is living for others. She searches her identity as an individual but her emotions are getting subdued. In both the novels, Women's own identity was not realized or recognized by their husbands.

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Shashi Deshpande is an award-winning Indian novelist. She is a winner of Sahitya Akademi Award which is one of the best awards for writers. Her book predicts about the Indian girls sufferings. In all her novels we can see the flash back stories. She insisted on violence against women, whether physical, mental or emotional. The women belonging to Indian middle class, who are brought up in a traditional environment and struggling to liberate themselves and seeks their self identity. She deals with the inner world of the Indian women in her novels. She portrays her heroines in a realistic manner and she usually used to say that "somebody once asked me if I have a social purpose in my writing and I very loudly said 'no'. I have no social purpose. I write because it comes to me". Also she feels that she is different from other Indians who write in English because she was never educated abroad and so her background is firmly rooted in India.

Dark Holds No Terror is the first novel of Shashi Deshpande. In this novel, she portrayed the woman's relationship between the society and the personal life. Sarita, the protagonist who is well educated and liberated modern woman from middle class family. Her ambition is to become the doctor but her mother is not allowed to do so. Her mother insists her to get marry rather than studying for doctor meanwhile she falls in love with Manohar who is from other caste. She married him in spite of her parental opposition. "As she always feels insecure in her parents' home, her marriage to Manu is a means of that love and security which she had always lacked in life. He is the ideal romantic hero who has come to rescue her from the insecure, loveless existence".

Later, Sarita dreams of establishing herself as a successful woman in her career is achieved. She became the respected woman in the society and her standard of living is increased day by day. At the same time, Manohar's inferiority complex is also

started to increase. He is working as a teacher in a college. Based on Indian traditions, Husband should maintain the family financially whereas in this novel Sarita's financial position is comparatively high. So the male egoism arises in the minds of Manohar. Thereafter he wants to prove his superiority over on her. So he tortured her physically during night times. She spent bad times with him. At last she decides to seek refuge in her parental home after a long gap of fifteen years. Externally she makes her show of her intension to take care of her father, but actually she wants to escape the tortures in inflicted on her every night by her husband. She remained in her parents' home and thought of cause for the failure of her marriage and she finally concluded that Manohar's male ego is responsible for the ruin of the family. She also blames herself that her ambition for power and progress totally ignored Manohar's existence. She gains confident and learn to trust herself. "All right so I am alone. But so's everyone else we have to go on trying. If we can't believe in ourselves we are sunk". She accepted the life as it is.

In her other novel, "That Long Silence" – is a story that happens in every middle class and educated Indian woman's life. Shashi Deshpande gives us an exceptionally accomplished portrayal of a woman trying to erase a 'long silence' begun in childhood and rooted in herself and in the constraints of her life. The protagonist Jaya is an educated middle class woman who lives with her husband Mohan and their two children Rahul and Rati. She is the typical Indian middle class woman who is confined between her realization and restriction. According to Indian tradition, a woman must defer to her husband in every possible respect, she must make the marital home pleasant for him. she must cook the meals, wash the dishes, and take care of the children. She must never enquire about money and she must acquiesce to her husband's every demand but in this novel Mohan doesn't care about his wife's feelings, emotions and talents. The male ego has given the woman an inferior status through the ages. Man has relegated her to a second class-citizen. A group of Indian women novelists in their, hybridity of thought and multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious social dimensions have conceptualized the women problem in general and

middle-class and upper-class women in particular. She doesn't live for herself. She lives only for others. So she lost her self identity. She admits 'Mohan's wife. Rahul's and Rati's mother. Not myself'. She played as a role of traditional woman the embodiment of tolerance, suffering and courage. But she finds herself as unfulfilled wife, a disappointed mother and a failed writer. Later she tried to examine herself when her family moved to Dadar flat for a temporary stay.

Jaya could never find an outlet to disclose with anyone and solve her problem, not even with her mother. Mohan's departure gives her ample space to self interrogate her inner self. She comes to understanding that her life comprised mostly of compromises rather than true affection. She finally comprehends that she too was responsible for her failure in understanding her husband and her children. She ends up with a positive note that "I'm not afraid anymore. The panic has gone. I'm Mohan's wife, I had thought and cut off the bits of me that had refused to be Mohan's wife. Now I know that kind of fragmentation is not possible. The child, hands in pockets, has been with me through the years. She is with me still"

By the end of the novel, Jaya decides to continue with her marriage, it is not because she is accepting the traditional role of a wife; on the contrary, she has rejected all the traditional ideas of roles in the course of her thinking. As she says, she has begun to see the world differently and therefore, she goes back into the marriage a changed person, knowing her life can never the same again".

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