

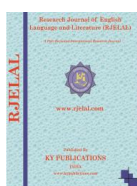


MASCULINITY AND MANHOOD IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S FICTION

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Abstract

Men and women have been defined differently in myths, religions, philosophy, psychology sociology, and culture, creating stereotypes of various kinds. These definitions and stereotypes often become so strong that it becomes difficult for individuals to defy or contradict them. This can be seen in how patriarchal ideology, reflected by all kinds of social, cultural, ideational and economic structures of the man-dominated world, assigns values to masculinity privileging man's position and interest. They go so deep into the psyche and intellect that it becomes too difficult for man to liberate himself from their hold. Any deviation from these definitions renders him vulnerable to doubts about his own identity and value as a man. This can plunge him into states of psychological, moral, and social crises affecting different areas of his life in various ways. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to understand the complexities of men's behaviour in context with their socially defined roles as provider and protector of their families in patriarchal societies. Shashi Deshpande, in her novels, convincingly presents such men who do not always feel free to make choices and take decisions but often have to act and behave within the limit of their defined image. No doubt, in doing so, they lose some of the qualities of their natural human self. This becomes evident once her treatment of men is analysed, focusing on the conflict between the determining roles of myths on the one hand and natural, authentic self on the other.

Keywords: Patriarchy; Men; Masculinity; Manhood; Stereotypes

The division of work, especially in patriarchal societies, is based on the gender or sex of a person. It means that the allocation of different roles, responsibilities, and work to men and women is based on the societal idea of what men and women should do and are capable of doing. Following this, different tasks and responsibilities are assigned to boys and girls, men and women, according to their gender roles, not necessarily according to their performances and capacities. While doing so, individuals' choices and preferences are completely ignored because the role of the social institutions in setting the gender

stereotypes is too powerful to be within the capacity of the individual to defy or challenge. There is no doubt that there are great choices and opportunities on the economic and political fronts, but there have been no corresponding liberalisation and democratisation of societal institutions. Modern men and women thus find themselves in a dilemma—facing, on the one hand, rapid modernisation on the political and economic fronts and, on the other hand, conservatism, rigidity and lack of choice on the social front. They often find it challenging to juxtapose the two worlds and, therefore, experience anxiety and

angst. In such situations, men, particularly, feel that acting out the traditional man assures them of a modicum of peace, besides earning more significant social approval and respect. That is why they tend to be more inclined to conform rather than resist the traditional patriarchal norms. The purpose of this paper is to depict how these norms muffle men's voice, as much as they do women's, and put manacles symbolically on their psyche which allows them to execute only those roles which are sanctioned by the myth of man and socio-cultural forces.

The very crucial roles men are supposed to perform in traditional societies are providers and protectors of their families. Men are required to scrupulously discharge their duties, not only to be mindful of them. Generally, the term 'provider' implies a man's duties to earn enough to fulfil the essential requirements of his family; to provide material comforts and give mental and emotional satisfaction to his wife, children, and other family members. It also refers to his duties to create means and opportunities of a better and healthy life for his family, offer chances of good schooling and job to his children, and fulfil his duties as the head of the family. It suggests that men should feel a great responsibility to always provide for the family financially and emotionally and physically. Highlighting the importance and role of the householder in society, Swami Vivekanand writes, "The householder is the basis, the prop, of whole society. The poor, the weak, and the women and children, who do not work—all live upon the householder..." (qtd. in Kakar 123). A duty closely related to the role of the provider is protecting all those he provides for. In the real sense of the term, 'protector' denotes a man with duties to keep his family members safe from physical and social harms, protect his family's honour, and ensure their security. His kin and kith are tied to him, and he is supposed to maintain and strengthen them through the care and protection he is supposed to give them. Purnendu Chatterjee aptly describes the roles of men when he says:

'provider' role in the domestic sphere, is associated with men as 'breadwinner', earning money or feeding family or providing

them with a social status through hard work In the domestic sphere, the protector is seen as a fearless, courageous man who protects the honour of the household by protecting women and children of the family. (172)

In fact, to execute these roles successfully, it is of great importance for a man to know that his earning capability keeps his family out of the grip of poverty. Indeed, he needs the satisfaction of a job well-done or a business is done with excellence. Even if a job is not enjoyable or fulfilling, there is a certain sense of satisfaction he gets from knowing that his family's requirements are met out of the income. It shows how much conscious a man remains of his duty to meet his family's financial needs and physical comfort. However, this does not mean that the wife cannot work and contribute financially, but the man must be the initiator, director and general manager. The household matters' overall administration matters should be his responsibility, and if the wife works outside the home, it is best if it is by mutual agreement. Besides being financially sound, a man should be physically robust and socially influential in protecting his family members from all types of harms. From very early on, man has been indoctrinated that women and children are weak and emotional and need male protection.

It is not that the desire to fulfil his duties in a man comes from biological impulses. There are many factors responsible for it. The traditional men tend to take these functions as natural aspects of their personality. They scrupulously try to perform these functions in their lives, setting an example to be followed by their male children. When the children are young and not yet equipped with the intellectual resources to resist psychological conditioning, patriarchal moral codes are planted in their heads, fostering great inequality. Gradually, these ideas get fossilised and are put into practice when the boys come of age. They grow up with a sense of a stake in the family and, therefore, accept it as entirely natural to wield responsibility and authority in family matters. They also know from a very early age that they are valued members of the

kin group. They learn to value kin support highly and in the course of the time, realise how crucial it is to their future as a so-called complete man. Even if some parents do not want their male children to engage in stereotypical masculine roles of provider and protector, such roles will be readily available to the child through television, friends, school, and family members. In this way, all children are exposed to gender stereotypes, a situation which is never easy to be fully controlled or stopped.

These roles of provider and protector bring to man a sense of responsibility, pride and ego. However, to perform these roles, man has to be rigid, authoritative, dominative, superior and successful. Man's role in society is designed around performance and achievement. He is defined and further defines himself in terms of his job, position, and social activities. He takes pride in being the head, breadwinner and protector of the family because being a man and living in a patriarchal society, and he is expected to discharge these functions. Kamla Bhasin is also of the opinion that "Men are expected to be providers and protectors not just of their women and children but of the honour and well-being of their families, communities and nations. As providers and protectors, they consider it their duty to discipline members of their families and communities" (36).

Initially, men enjoy their high status, power, and superiority by their too much essential roles of being the provider and protector of their families. Nevertheless, this status and dominance do not come without the burden of responsibilities, pressures and problems. They are bound to perform their role; otherwise, they feel degraded in society and fall in their esteem. Moreover, their status and pride are not permanent; they have to struggle to maintain it by successfully performing their functions, which seems problematic for many men. Contrary to the popular perception, in the modern world, men are as much the victims of the patriarchal ideology as women are, even if they have traditionally benefited from it in specific ways. For example, they get trapped in the images and roles that society has determined for them. The patriarchal ideology which romanticises man's

achievement of higher cultural aims, such as success at work, takes its toll on his life by obliging him to accept the risky lifestyle. It diminishes his concern for health and personal well-being and, in the process, subjects him to tensions and psychological pressures. Rajeshwar Mittapali and Litzia Alverno rightly observe that "Their stiff upper lip attitude, which patriarchal ideology compels them to maintain, makes them silently suffer emotional crises, earns them the accusation of being articulate, alienates them from their immediate family members and robs them of their chance of engaging in love" (5).

Socio-economic changes in present time have led to some alterations in gender roles and relations. Women are also emerging in social, economic, and political fields. They are stepping forward in the areas which were hitherto supposed to be reserved for men. Most of the men feel alarmed, taking it as a threat to their masculine identity. Besides this, the increasing widespread unemployment in men is taking away from them the privilege of being provider and breadwinner, and in "cases where women have succeeded in gaining the primary place as provider and breadwinner, leading to change in gender relations," Kamla Bhasin writes, "men have felt threatened enough to hit back against women and against those organisations that have supported those changes" (54). This tendency to resort to violence in situations of a threat to his prestige becomes worse, particularly in the absence of a proper source of information, guidance, and counselling needed for a sympathetic and mature understanding of the others. His failure to appreciate the needs of women as individuals very often is the result of the fact that he is driven mainly by his own innate urge to be the master of his house or the slavish imitation of man's image propagated by popular culture. Myths also reinforce the tendency of a man who seeks power and status of a provider and protector. One of its consequences manifests itself in the conflict between men as individuals and his socio-cultural milieu. However, there are still those whose genuine human-self remains alive and sensitive to the members of the other sex, giving them due recognition and respect. In such cases, the influence of healthy socialisation

and education appears to play an important role.

Nevertheless, the socio-cultural forces' pressure always compels men to do their best to maintain the norms of manhood at any cost; otherwise, they have to face the humiliation and disapproval of society. To escape social disgrace and degradation, they are driven to sacrifice their deep feelings and emotions at the altar of duty, generating tremendous tensions and conflicts in their life. They find it too challenging to go against the prescriptions and prohibitions laid down by the patriarchal culture. That is why they can often be caught up in a struggle to prove their masculine prowess. This further limits men's choices and puts them in the straightjacket of masculinity in which they feel uncomfortable and suffocated. This forces men to be only men and not complete human beings bringing a change in their behaviour and their relations with family members. Thus, when a man turns rude and violent towards his family members, he cannot be blamed entirely. His wishes become insignificant before social norms and, ultimately, he becomes not a champion, but a victim of patriarchy. Moreover, it is not that only the individual who fails to perform his roles as provider and protector face the consequences of his failure; his family members also suffer on this account. For example, his old parents and wife do not get respect in society, and his children fail to get good schooling and opportunities for a better future. Families of such men tend to be condemned to a kind of unsaid social segregation and are treated as black sheep posing a threat to society's health.

Being a part of the tradition-bound society, Shashi Deshpande seems to have the minute knowledge of its workings. Her novels reflect how the socio-cultural environment that influences gender identities assigns different roles and responsibilities to both men and women. Here one finds a panoramic view of many men whose efforts, successes and failures in performing their expected roles in society are convincingly portrayed.

How a man's failure to be the primary breadwinner of his family distorts his human self by making him behave like a beast is depicted in Deshpande's first published novel *The Dark Holds No*

Terrors through the character of Manohar alias Manu. No doubt, Saru is the novel's protagonist, but Manu also emerges as an important character in the background. In her college days, Saru falls in love with Manu and later marries him much against her mother's will. Initially, Manu has all the charming qualities associated with a romantic hero. In college, he had pride and an air of being superior. He was the life and soul of the Dramatic Society. Furthermore, in addition to this, "a budding writer, a poet of promise, with some poems already published in magazines" (50). He tries to maintain, at least initially, the pride and position he earned in the college even after marrying Saru.

Man is a social animal and maintains his social status to play the roles as expected by society. He can do this by performing the roles of a husband in his society. To provide for his wife and to protect her, therefore, become his paramount concern. In a broad sense, a provider's role implies the duty of arranging a house for his family. Therefore, providing a house comes to most of the men as a challenge to their prestige as heads of the families. Manu is acutely conscious of the fact that he does not have his own house. Saru recalls, " 'It was Manu who had been adamant about that. I'm not going to have us live apart' he said. 'I refuse to continue this way, meeting an hour or so each evening. We must have a place of our own, even if it's just a room' " (36). When he feels that Saru is not convinced, he starts cajoling her, which further shows how keen he is to have a house of his own. He pleads: "It's just one room in a chawl. You have to share the toilet. Want to back out? Wait, Saru, don't look like that, think it over. And this too. We may not get a place for months, may be years, with the little I can afford to pay. You know I've been doing nothing but house-hunting for the last few months" (37). Initially, he proves to be a loving and caring husband. He is very much concerned about Saru's happiness. Like a responsible husband, he understands Saru's feelings. She is living away from her parents for fifteen years and is not ready to go to her father's home for a long time even after her mother's death. Manu knows the pangs of living apart from one's family and, therefore, like a loving husband, he cannot see Saru in grief.

His love and care are matched and also fostered by Saru's admiration of the remembered talents of Manu, which gives him the necessary confidence and a feeling of being superior and successful. He considers himself the prop and bedrock of their marriage. He seems to get a sense of satisfaction and pride because he is a college lecturer, the breadwinner of the family, and his wife, Saru, is only a not-much-recognised doctor dependent on him for her needs and requirements. Everything is all right as long as Manu has this feeling of being important in the relationship, but his problems begin to rise the moment Saru begins to win recognition and admiration. Her growing stature as the primary source of income for the family makes him very insecure in his authority position. This comes to fore when there is an explosion in the nearby factory. Burnt and mutilated bodies pour in, and Saru has to attend on them. After this incident, Saru emerges as a successful and reputed doctor. Almost every morning, there is a knock at the door for her medical attention. Saru, young and inexperienced in her profession, is thrilled with her new job, but moving out of the traditional image of a dependent and economically subordinate wife shatters Manu's feelings of being the superior partner in their relationship. He feels ignored and belittled as Saru gets all the attention. It brings a drastic change in his behaviour. Initially, Saru fails to notice this change in Manu, but later she realises that " ' .the esteem with which I was surrounded made me inches taller. But perhaps, the same thing that made me inches taller, made him inches shorter' " (42). This subversion of his position shakes the very foundation of his sense of manhood. Although he does not show any overt sign of feeling inferior to his wife, Saru quickly perceives a change in his behaviour. The idea of equality of both husband and wife, appears to be unacceptable to him. Saru, too, feels this and says that "a+b they told us in Mathematics is equal to b+a. But here a+b was not, definitely not equal to b+a. It became a monstrously unbalanced equation, lopsided, unequal, impossible" (42). Manu starts realising that the profession of a doctor is much more superior to that of a lecturer. As a result of this, the warmth between them gradually cools down, and the

harmony suddenly gets disrupted.

The life that they began together eventually becomes a powerful race of the two egoistical people in which she overtakes him effortlessly. It does not take her long to recognise that Manu is no 'Shelley'. She, for a short while, feels superior to and more important than Mohan. On the other hand, the notion of being the primary producer in marriage haunts Manohar. When his wife seems to occupy his place, he feels his status of a husband diminished, as in patriarchal societies a man earning less than his wife does not always get respect. Both Manu and Saru, seem to believe firmly in this societal view. Consequently, Saru's respect for Manu wanes when she recognises him to be a failure. Premila Paul argues in this context: "Career becomes an indispensable crutch for Saru as it gives so much importance and power over others" (32). In her new role as a career woman, Saru is no longer happy in their shabby apartment, and she prefers to move into something more decent and beautiful. She feels that the flat in which she and Manu have been living all these years is narrow and Manu's earning now makes her feel that it barely covers her needs. Her changing attitude makes Manu more agonisingly conscious of his secondary status.

His agony substantiates if women suffer due to their status as a second class citizen, men indeed suffer due to the excess of privilege they feel threatened by their failures. Sociologist Ann Oakley rightly points out that "the strain of playing the masculine role in modern civilisation shows signs of mounting to breaking point" (58). He becomes all the more conscious of it when he begins to see a change in Saru's behaviour. Manu turns out simply a lecturer, and Saru becomes a famous doctor. This makes him socially and economically inferior to her. Slowly "an affected indifference" (36) starts to appear in Saru's tone because "There were nods of smile, murmured greetings and *namastes*. But they were all for me, only for me. There was nothing for him. He was almost totally ignored. Earlier he had been the young man and I his bride. Now, I was the lady doctor and he was my husband" (36). The lover in him dies when the neighbours wake up to the fact that Saru is not an ordinary housewife but a vital

doctor. Manu loses his grip over the role of primary breadwinner of his family assigned to men by society. He finds himself invisible under the shadow of his wife. He feels so ashamed and inferior that it leads to unpredictable changes in his behaviour. He takes it as a threat to his identity. The masculine ego clash becomes inevitable because, as Saru says, "I am something more than his wife, and he has become what he is" (70). This upside down alteration—"this terrible thing" (37)—destroys their marriage.

In patriarchy, the role of a woman is limited mainly to home and hearth. If she works outside the home and earns something, it is seen merely as a small addition to the husband's income. Her role as a primary earner is seldom acceptable; hence she always finds herself at loggerheads with social norms. For this reason, when Saru's success begins to highlight Manu's failure, he takes it as his disgrace and degradation. In her attitude, Manu finds not just an itching of domination but a total ignoring of him. He feels that she no longer cares for his likes and dislikes. In Saru's self-centred march to progress, Manu feels his existence nullified. He becomes irritable and grows tired of being ignored everywhere, and his wife getting all the attention and praise. His inability to accept the reversal of traditional roles makes him morose and Saru, unaware of this, takes his roughness as a sign of the ardour of his love. However, soon she realises that Manu has started neglecting her quite early. This simmering inferiority complex of Manu assumes serious proportions on the day a lady, who comes to interview her, asks Manu, "How does it feel when your wife earns not only the butter but the bread as well?" (53). This question annihilates the very pedestal of his manly status. He feels so humiliated that he turns brutal and begins to treat his wife at night like a savage. Unable to come to terms with the fact that he is a failure and his wife a remarkable success in life, Manu lets his wounded male pride manifest itself in the form of sexual sadism. The bed is the only place where he can assert his animal power over her. He seems to suffer from a severe psychological problem caused by his feelings of degradation of manhood in society. What Kamla Bhasin says is precisely the case with Manu:

The erosion of male power and privilege in some spheres of life has led to psychological and social problems for many men. This decline in the economic and social power of men within the household is leading some men into greater violence against women; into alcoholism and drug abuse, or violent crime, as antidotes to anger and frustration. (4)

Manu becomes a mean and loathsome fellow when he basks in her glory by day and ill-treats her at night. Saru is terrified by such nightmarish experiences which lead to a change in her attitude towards marital life. She now considers 'sex' as a dirty word. With her responsibilities increasing outside of the home, she recoils from Manu's love-making, and he takes her rejection of sex as a rejection of himself. He feels that she has denied his right over her body. Saru, however, is unhappy over the situation and perhaps also understands the reason behind it. She gathers up all her courage and tells Manu, "I want to stop working. I want to give it all up. . . my patients, the hospital, everything" (79). Manu's real problem is her career as a successful doctor which ultimately makes him a split personality. The observation of Rajeshwar Mittapalli and Letizia Alterno on the condition of men who find themselves at odds with socio-cultural values is also correct in the case of Manohar. They write, "Caught in this vortex, for which they are utterly unprepared, Indian men experience a split within and the inner conflict sometimes boils over and spills into the social arena in unimaginable, and rarely even in destructive, ways" (5).

Mohan in *That Long Silence* is another character who further illustrates Deshpande's abilities as an artist to capture and render the workings of a man's mind. Apparently, this novel is the story of the protagonist, Jaya Kulkarni, who recalls her married life with nostalgia. She was married to Mohan and lived with him at different places till he went away from her to clear himself of the charge of business malpractice. She recalls her relationship with innumerable relatives and friends with compassion and understanding. But behind this story of the novel lies one more story of Mohan's

struggle, efforts, expectations, frustration, apprehensions and their consequences on himself and others. Mohan has suffered the humiliation of poverty in his childhood. Now he is acutely conscious of his duties to support his brothers and sisters. Experiences of poverty and consciousness of responsibility towards the extended family spur his urge to earn more and more both for social status and economic security. He is so anxious to be respected by his wife as a caring, responsible and protective husband that he gets involved in the reckless race for money.

In spite of the fact that his father had been cruel and had provided for the barest of the necessities, Mohan had been a dutiful son and elder brother. He appears to know very well that in a patriarchal society, the eldest son is expected to take on himself the responsibility of looking after and providing for his old parents. Those who escape from their responsibility are looked down upon in society. That is why Mohan scrupulously assumes the role of being the provider of the family. He regularly sends money to his father—for Sudha's fees, her marriage and Vasant's clothes. Even after his father's death, he keeps on sending money to his family regularly and makes it a point to attend the death anniversary of his father. He also bears the entire expenditure of it. Jaya reveals his sense of responsibility towards his family when she thinks:

Parents and children, for Mohan the tie was sacrosanct. It was not just a question of duty, though that came first to Mohan. Even in our worst days, he had dutifully sent his father some money in the first week of the month, whatever our problems may have been. But there was more than just duty in Mohan's theory. To Mohan, parents loved their children and children loved their parents—because they were parents and children. (78)

All this suggests how men are conditioned to take it as their duty to meet the needs and requirements of their families' members. Deshpande draws attention to the stress and strains they have to suffer due to their socially and culturally determined obligations. Such attitude and value system force men to be

fiercely competitive for career and money. This male behaviour pattern manifests itself more aggressively, particularly when he has a wife or some other woman to take care of. In such cases, men are often haunted by fears lest their dreams of a secure future with a wife and children should be shattered. Like most of the other counterparts of his gender, Mohan shudders to imagine his family living in poverty and squalour. He tells Jaya the story of squatting women and children he saw in Delhi. He tells her, "Those women were sitting on the bare ground, right in the dirt, mind you, not even a bit of a newspaper or a mat under them, just sitting on the ground like—like beggars. Imagine, Jaya people like us in that situation" (75). These fears of Mohan speak clearly not only of his concerns for his family's well-being but also of a threat he perceives to his authority and self-respect which depend on his ability to protect his wife and children from want and deprivation.

His deep-seated sense of insecurity and the desire to give all the comforts, facilities and status to his family combine to blinker his vision and turn him into a corrupt official. While working at Lohanagar as a small-time engineer, he asks Jaya to be friendly with the chief engineer's wife so that he may win his favour to secure a spacious quarter for his family. Again, after moving to Bombay, encouraged by his colleague, Agarwal, he accepts illegal gratification so that his family might live in comfort and his children might attend good schools. Ironically, this reckless race for money and status for his family throws him into the dark pit of fear and uncertainty about his job and thus his very position as a head of the family. When an inquiry is constituted against him, he feels anxious and apprehensive because he knows that losing a well-paid job means a terrible financial insecurity and also a fall in the estimation of his wife and relatives. Initially, like a man well-versed in the so-called ideal masculine behaviour, he tries to conceal his fears and anxieties from his wife, Jaya. He does this because he wants to be regarded like all those real men who "... are supposed to give comfort and strength. If they break down, cry, or seek comfort they may be considered 'less masculine' " (Masculinity). When he has to shift from his Church Gate home to Dadar flat during inquiry against him,

he can be seen as nervous and worried and very anxious and jealous about his authority as a husband. In such a situation of uncertainty he expects his wife, Jaya, to be with him but, even when he is in trouble, he gets not even a single word of comfort and sympathy from her side. He complains though he has done everything for her and the children, she had not stood by him when he needed it the most. He has tried to conceal his feelings of fear and anxiety, but, this time, he fails to control his inner turmoil and, in a fit of anger, bursts out:

'If ever I'd been irresponsible and callous,'... 'but I've never been that. I've always put you and the children first, I've been patient with all your whims, I've grudged you nothing. But the truth is that you despise me because I've failed. As long as I had my job and position, it was all right; as long as I could give you all the comforts, it was all right. But now, because I'm likely to lose it all. . . .' (121)

The fear of slipping down from his position as the provider of his family makes him feel degraded in his own esteem. He also appears to be conscious that a man has to face the humiliation in patriarchal society if he fails to fulfil his duties. That is why, to escape such social disgrace, he tries to defend his status and position as a provider both in home and society. He leaves for Delhi to settle the embezzlement case he is engaged in because he seems to know that masculine status is not static, it always has to be continuously preserved from erosion. Sara White is very much to the point when she asserts:

Unlike the imagery of established patriarchal power, most studies show masculinity as being rather fragile, provisional, something to be won and then defended, something under constant threat of loss Certainly it does not appear to be self reliant and autonomous. On the contrary, masculinity seems to be depended chronologically on the estimation of others, to be highly vulnerable to attack by ridicule, shaming, subordination or dishonourable female action. (36)

In fact, in Mohan's character, there emerges the

picture of a so-called complete man who strives to perform his masculine role in his patriarchal society. Deshpande has very effectively revealed through him the tensions and anxieties, fears, and struggles of a traditional man striving to live up to men's socially defined image by fulfilling his duties and responsibilities towards his family. Through Mohan's predicament, the novelist has vividly and incisively portrayed all that happens to a man due to his internalisation of the definitions of what it means to be a good or real man. This aspect of man's perception of self and his behaviour with others, particularly with his wife, testifies the novelist's understanding of the male psyche conditioned by socio-economic and cultural factors.

Deshpande as a keen observer of society and human behaviour has rendered in her fiction very insightfully and artistically all these different aspects of the life of man conditioned by the myths and definitions of masculinity prevalent in his cultural and social milieu. She shows, on the one hand, the power and privileges it bestows on man, but she depicts with equal understanding and knowledge the struggles, stresses and strains it condemns them to. Her novels offer a powerful portrayal of the tensions and travails it poses, particularly when men fail to find it difficult to live up to the expectations of providing and protecting their families successfully in every situation. Her fiction gains in verisimilitude and authenticity by the way she has delineated not only the causes and consequences of these traditionally defined roles of men, but also by the manner in which she depicts the psyche, attitudes and behaviour of women in this respect

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