

# The Harsh Blow of Patriarchy on Woman's Psychology in Shashi Deshpande's "A Liberated Woman"

Ankita Pandey

MA, Department of English, University of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India.

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**Abstract**— Shashi Deshpande's work depicts women spiraling down in their duties, responsibilities, and career. Without giving due importance to their desires and emotional wellbeing. The protagonist in the story "A Liberated Woman" is a well-settled doctor going through a stark identity crisis due to her troubled marriage which she presumes to be a result of her success. Shashi vividly shows the agony of an educated woman falling in the frustrating dilemma of following the traditions of patriarchy by continuing an abusive marriage or expressing herself as an individual and boldly protecting both her sanity and her self-respect but chooses to reproach herself and her circumstances and accept the situations as it is like most of middle-class women.

**Keywords**— Identity Crisis, troubled marriage, traditions, patriarchy, sanity, and self-respect.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Born in 1938 in Dharwad, India Shashi Deshpande is the daughter of a playwright who herself started writing in the 1960s. She is capable of uncovering the vicious truth of silent oppressions on women both mentally and emotionally.

In most of her short stories she successfully portrays women as they are not as they are expected to be displayed in any literary work. She has written about a lot of crucial themes and ideologies like in "That Long Silence" the silent escape of Jaya leaving her neighbour Kaamat on the floor due to the fear of judgement of what people specially her husband will think about her presence in another man's home, in the story "Intrusion" the humiliation faced by the newlywed lady through her husband's intrusion in her privacy. and the reticent acceptance of marital rapes in a decade long marriage in "A Liberated Woman".

These narratives enshrine the power of the author's thought process not only for suppressed and marginalized women but also for those women who are financially supporting their families.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

In the short story "A liberated Woman" Deshpande touches the sensitive psychology of a woman who is financially independent, competent, a mother of two, and a strong

woman who against the will of her parents married the guy of her own choice but as she rises to fame and success her husband's inferiority complex takes the marriage to an ugly point for her, the protagonist gives interviews to motivate younger generation girls but deep down holds a secret of mental moreover physical oppression to uphold the perfect image of a complete woman.

The story also shows how she shares all her despondence and agony with her friend in the garb of a smile on her face without shedding a single tear presenting the fact of how woman shares their hard times just to release the pent up pain and frustration so that they can carry on with their very lives despite its dark and obscure future.

The double standard of the male chauvinistic population shines through her husband castigating her wife when she decides to leave all work to avoid the physically bruising and emotionally bleeding nights, she is made to realize that how can she even think that the whole house will survive in his petty income even though she earns butter and more of the bread for the family instead of getting acknowledged she is made to feel worse.

The internal strife of the protagonist has reached a point where she feels he is not to be blamed because it is her mistake to have outgrown her personality and a bigger name than his spouse. She holds herself responsible for his failure as a writer. Shashi Deshpande throws the spotlight

on how society is conditioned in a way that MAN is always a degree higher than the woman despite a lot of changes in the past years some men who yet struggle to accept the talent and hard work of women and demean them but superficially enact to understand and praise them.

The author absorbed stories of many women who feel guilty of being a notch higher than their male counterparts just because of the way they are treated subsequently not only by family but also by the remarks of others on their partners which aggravates their partners inner low self-esteem resulting in their violent outbreaks.

### III. CONCLUSION

Shashi Deshpande is famous for centering self-deprivation in women. In "A Liberated Woman" she clearly shows the protagonist as a successful doctor which becomes the reason for her broken marriage according to her.

In a patriarchal society, women are victimized and empathized by others for their emotional and physical weakness rather than being helped and counseled. They are overburdened due to the presumed set of duties to make and run the house sacrificing their self which makes them "Good Women" because of which many women even today survive in a heartless relationship where the marriage is internally a deadpan henceforth proving the lines of author Simone De Beauvoir in "The Second Sex",

"It has been said that marriages diminish man which is often true but almost always it annihilates women"

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