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THE MOTHER DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEMINISTIC APPROACH IN SHASHI DESHPANDE AND MANJU KAPUR'S SELECTED WORKS

INTRODUCTION:

Back to pre independent era, Indian women writers have started writing in English. It was under British Raj women writers like Torru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu started writing in English under the spirit of freedom fighting against British rules and love for nation. Gandhiji's movements for free India, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand Saraswati's fights to abolish the practice of Sati, the custom of child marriage, custom of distinguishing widows, the ban on remarriage of the upper caste Hindu widows and many other civil practices and later the atmosphere of freedom struggle influenced women for their libations during pre Independence India and these effects were depicted by Indian women writers in both English and regional languages.

With the passage of time after independence more and more women started taking part in social, cultural, economical and political instances. However women were not appreciated as men in patriarchal society. The supreme power in each of fields had been conducted by men only for a long time. It was after 1960s to 1990s Indian women jump into feministic world day by day and they became aware of their identities. They began to connect themselves with household and professional duties. They were in attempt to place themselves equally as men in the society.

In modern India there are bunch of women writers who hold their own views and they write without any hesitations same as male writers. Many of them have their own feministic perceptions and they try to present women psyche as a whole in their writings. The themes of Indian women writers stand for women's emancipations and their rights. Women have been suffering a lot since many times. They are considered as the object or the instrument of reproduction. Women have been keeping a silence from long time. Women are submissive part of patriarchal society. Today is the time for each of women to come out of the shell of pain, sorrow and misery of suppression and subjugations and to transcend themselves to prove their belongingness in this male dominated society. Such issues are the center of Indian women writers such as Shashi Deshpande, Kamla Das, Kamla Markandey, Esther Devid, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy, Manju kapur, Pratima Mitchell, Indira Goswami, Shobha De, migrated writers Bharti Mukherji, Jumpha Laheri and so on who have contributed to Indian English literature.

FEMINISM:

The term 'Feminism' has been derived from the original Latin word 'Femina' means a woman, later been referred to an advocacy of women's rights, status and power in the men centric society to adhere with same equality of sexes.

Simone de Beauvoir aptly said in her essay, "one is not born rather becomes a woman" (Beauvoir, 1953). Since her childhood, a girl is always taught by her parents, family, teachers or society that she has to behave in certain manners just because she is a female. She is not given freedom as male has been giving rather she must follow the traditions and obey the rules made by patriarchal society. A girl is born individually

just with different physical organs as a boy but it is society which gives social perception to a gender and changes it into 'the other sex'.

According to Virginia Woolf, a grandmother of Feminism, "A woman must have money and room of her own if she is to write fiction." (Woolf, 1929) She believes that Money stands for power and freedom and a room of her own is to have contemplative thinking. She emphasizes that a woman must earn firstly, if a woman is economically independent, she can do whatever she likes.

FEMINISTIC WRITINGS IN INDIAN CONTEXT:

Feminism is a struggle for equality of women, an effort to make women free like men. The combative definition of feminism sees it as the struggle against all forms of patriarchal and sexist aggression. The growth of Indian Feminism and its development is seen in the works of Indian women writers. They have placed the problems of Indian women in general and they have proved their place in the international literature.

What women write is all about female subjectivity with feminine perception. They depict their own identity in their novels. However this is the reason why their works are undervalued as they belong to patriarchal world where male experiences are always superior to female assumptions. Indian society gave much priority to men centric works. Male writers always dealt with heavy themes and works of women are not being appreciated. This prejudice comes because women writers are used to write on domestic violence, domestic space, sufferings and conflicts of women in men centric society as a female point of views. The majority of the novels by women portray the psychological suffering of the frustrated housewife; however such themes become lower and artificial when compared to the depiction of the repressed and oppressed lives of women who belong to lower classes that we find in writings of regional authors too.

Women writings became more feminist and modern during 20th century. These women writings got appreciation too. Such women have money and western education and highly intellectuality too. Their write ups reflect burning issues on women they have been suffering from long back and also on those latest problems exist in our society. They proclaim that this is the time to show that women have immense compatibility. A great mass of readers thoroughly enjoy these books as they describe whole world of female psyche and each and every perception of women hood by their simple, stunning and candid writings.

The modern women think differently, they want to break their silence which they have been keeping from so long back; this thought is depicted by Indian women writers. Their novels reflect such feminist theme that now is the era when women are the same competent as man is and women are neither helpless nor dependent. These feminist novels dealt with such reality of the recent time that now a day women can earn money, they are not compelled to do house hold stuff only. These facts are formed by the women writers.

Indian women writers have started questioning the prominent domination of patriarchy. Now women are no longer toys or puppets of patriarchal society. They are keen fresh to produce both qualitative and quantitative literature without any kind of obstacles. This is the reason the modern English literature develops faster with the interpret experiences of female writers.

Many women writers have explored women psyche with a view to establishing identity of women. They have developed female subjectivity in their writings from childhood to womanhood to represent women in general. Sanatha Rama Rau's *Remember for the house* (1956), Ruth Prawar Jhabvala's first novel *To whome she will* (1955) and her following novel *Heart and Dust* (1975), Kamala Markandya's *Two virgins* (1994), Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli* (1977) and Geeta Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992), Prtima Mitchell's *Indian Summer* (2009), Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy's *A God of small things* (1997), Anita Desai's *Cry the Peacock* (1963), Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* (1988) etc. project the exploration of women's wholeness.

SHASHI DESHPANDE'S THE BINDING VINE:

A quest of women's identity is one of the prominent themes seen in the works of Shashi Deshpande and Manju kapur. *The Binding Vine* (1993) and *The Difficult Daughters* (1998) present the place of women in patriarchal society and how they are bound to follow the traditions and rules made by male dominated society. Women are always victims of fate and men centric world. They are caged in the name of olden customs.

Urmi the narrator of *The Binding Vine* connects herself with different women during her traumas while death of her younger daughter and realizes that each of women have their own sufferings and pains. She confronts the diaries and letters containing poetry of Mira, her dead mother in law in which Mira has written that she was the victim of social rituals. At the very small age Meera was forcefully got married off. Being a wife she had to sleep with her husband, though she didn't love her. She was raped metaphorically each of nights. Mira's mother knew this fact however she had never been given a chance to tell that she was not happy with her married life. "The Radical Feminists allege that marriage is at the very root of women's subjection to the man because, through it, man controls both her reproduction and her person" (Banks, 1982)

Shashi Deshpande portrays social evil of marital rape through the character of Meera. Even in the midst of vulnerable pain and fear of being trapped forever, Mira is aware of the new-found love for her unborn child. But Mira is unfortunate even in this-she dies in childbirth "...having bled to death within an hour after her child was born." (Deshpande, 2001)

The relationship between Shakutai and her daughter Kalpna reveals how a middle class woman is always afraid of society since a woman is considered as an object only. Shakutai curses her daughter Kalpana that her fashionable life style derives her to be raped. She is a traditional woman who believes that having a daughter is a blot. She does not file the case of her daughter's rape who is admitted in the hospital and very near to death due to a man's wickedness just because she is afraid of the society, thinking that now Kalpana's younger sister Sandhya will not able to survive after Kalpana is wronged. The fear of a cruel mentality of our society towards a victim woman is aptly described in this novel.

Shakutai condemns herself when she knows that Kalpana has been wronged by her own uncle. Though Shakutai is deserted by her husband for another woman, she thinks that society would blame her that it was she who left her husband and the reason of Kalpana's rape. She hesitates to tell the whole story to press reporter Malcom as she is in constant fear of male dominated society where no one is going to understand the pain of her daughter rather she would be the center of gossiping. Pилоo has committed suicide as she is also victimized woman by her own husband Prabahkar who raped Kalpana. She has brought up Kalpana like her own child but her own husband had kept wrong eye on this innocent girl and one day he spoiled Kalpana.

Where Meera, Shakutai, Pилоo and Kalpana are symbol of submissive and victimized part of this society Shashi Deshpande has also depicted the strong characters like Urmi, Priti and Vandana who not only take care of house hold but they are professionals too in the same society. They also cope up between family and professional lives. They have their own views to live up their lives. They are sentimental but not suppressed characters. Deshpande has worked on the female bonding, the mother daughter relationships with the generation gaps and social evils in this novel make her a great feminist writer itself.

MANJU KAPUR'S THE DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS:

The Difficult Daughters (1998) is Manju Kapur's first novel wonderfully written presenting three generations of women. Protagonist of this novel is torn between social responsibilities and her education as well as illicit love for a married professor. This novel displays the journey of Virmati as a new woman who does not escape but breaks the tradition of male centric society.

Through Virmati's character Kapur talks about such girls who are under the family responsibilities of younger siblings and dedicate themselves in house hold customs. Similar to Indian girls in some cultures Virmati in this novel is also discriminated, she is not being given freedom to study further or to choose her life

partner of her tastes. Virmati is a second mother of her younger brothers and sisters, she is constantly busy to look after her youngest sister Paro, and as a result she fails in exams of FA in lack of reading. She yearns for love and attention from her family but her family has bound her to rear her ten siblings as a duty of an eldest sister.

Kapur focuses on mothers like Kasturi and Lajwanti as traditional women, who have accepted norms of patriarchal society and they can't see or think beyond it. For Kasturi, Virmati is a care taker of her children. She believes that marriage is the ultimate destiny of a girl saying "When I was your age, girls only left their house when they married and beyond a certain age" (Kapur, 1998). Worry of her daughter's marriage is also seen in tones of Lajwanti though she knows that her daughter Shankuntla is an earning woman living independently with her own conceptions towards life.

Virmati is much influenced by her cousin sister Shankutla, and her beloved Prof. Harish, inspire her to come out from house and to educate herself. Virmati gets aspiration from Shankutla that there are many things in life to do than being a wife and she goes Lahor to study further though a constant denial of her mother. She is displayed as a bold woman who in spite of family rejections continues her affair with a married professor. She becomes an object of gossiping at Nahan due to her meetings with her beloved and she lost her job as a teacher. She gets aborted professor's eggs inside her womb two times still seeks social acceptance as his wife. Professor has always his problems to do with however after five years she occupies her place as his second wife in his home. This marriage with professor makes her failed as an ideal daughter and she is also scorned by all members in Harish's place.

Virmati is depicted as a courageous woman who in spite of all obstacles in her life reaches to her goals. Her daughter Ida is inspired by her mother when she acknowledges mere life span of Virmati after her death. Ida finds a great connection with her mother as a woman and feels proud of her.

This novel is the topic of feminist discourse not because Manju Kapur is a woman writing about women's issues but because she tries to understand a woman both as a woman and as a human being pressurized by visible and invisible contexts. She succeeds to present a glimpse of feminism in this novel keeping in mind the Indian context.

CONCLUSION:

Since last four decades women have stopped portraying their image as self sacrificing traditional women or tolerating conflicts rather they have moved away from past and gone for questing their identities. They have completely changed their victim status recently. Women writers focus on such themes with the perspectives of women. They like to work on discovery of not only man and woman relationships but also between two women relationships so far. Women's presentation is more actual, articulate, decent, sensible, reasonable, assertive and librated in their point of views than before.

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Jinaal Brahmbhatt
PhD Research Scholar
Gujarat University

