

**Exploring Female Identity: A Comparative Study of
the Selected Novels of Shashi Deshpande and
Mridula Garg**

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By
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Declaration

I declare that the thesis entitled " Exploring Female Identity: A Comparative Study of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg," has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Rajinder Kumar Sen, Assistant Professor, Department of Languages and Comparative Literature, School of Languages, Literature and Culture, Central University of Punjab. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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ABSTRACT
**EXPLORING FEMALE IDENTITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE
SELECTED NOVELS OF SHASHI DESHPANDE AND MRIDULA GARG**

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Female identity is a very complicated concept in the contemporary era. In addition to that, it becomes more complicated when discussed in reference to gender socialisation, violence, and exploitation. Women have been viewed and perceived within the constructed patriarchal structure of gender difference. In the domain of patriarchal culture, the woman is a social construct. The present research work tries to probe into the silences, subordination and voices of exploited women by undertaking a comparative study of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg by using feminism as a theoretical framework. The contemporary writers are critiquing the unspoken voices to explore their exploitation in various domains. Feminism is a highly innovative concept representing a significant departure from the traditional mode of critical evaluation. In the selected novels both the writers represent the series of female characters who have exploited. They project realistically the women's plight and exploitation in the patriarchal society. It explores how men establish their masculine power and fulfil their desire by assaulting women. Through the feminist theory, the present study tries to explore the female identity which is constructed by the socio-cultural aspect.

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I can do all things through **JESUS CHRIST** who strengthens me.

(Philippians 4:13)

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Chapter 1

Female Identity: Conceptual Understanding

Female identity is a very polemical issue in contemporary literary works. In the postmodern literature, identity has been discussed in various communities that are interrelated with sexuality, gender, race and migration. Literature has always been the site of life, social politics, inequality, domination, dispute, racism, hunger, poverty, identity or any other aspect of reality. The issue of identity has been a major issue in contemporary psychology, social theory, cultural studies and literary criticism. Many critics have described it in different perspectives like social, culture, politics, religion, etc. There have been social, political, economic and cultural developments which have helped in the construction of identity. These various developments within the twentieth century and social thought have forced attention to identity. In the social structure, society forms identities because from birth to death different roles are already set to be performed. When a child is born, gender roles are assigned to him/ her.

Thus social structure, culture and patriarchy decide all the rules to be followed. Society constructs identities and in a family when a child is born parents fix the rules for their children. In the construction of identity, these substances fabricate the ideology in the social structure for the identification of male and female. Wherein, males and females identify themselves within the cultural and societal setup. To understand female identity one needs to understand the culture, tradition, philosophy, patriarchy and ideology of that particular region. Erik Homburger Erikson a well-known German American psychologist explains the construction of identity and female identity says:

Identity as a core construct for development, it is also a part of the psychological analysis, identity formation for the female needs to be understood in the broader sense that addresses the question of how one's individuality and continuity fit within the communal sense of wholeness.(qtd. in Gatobu 7)

In the context of female identity Erik Erikson points out that how one's an entity forms an entire being. It is also related to gender politics and it needs

psychological analysis. Identity formation goes through many phases with the changing aspects of society. Amartya Sen explains elements that forms an identity that: "A person's citizenship, residence, geographic origin, gender, class, politics, profession, employment, food habits, sports, interest, taste in music, social commitments, etc. make us members of a variety of groups. Thus, Erik Erikson Emphasises in Anne kiome Gatobu's book *Identity formation and Response to Intimate Violence* emphasis:

Development of the sense of self is a function of the internalised social, cultural and religious influences on the individual aspirations to identify with and attain wholeness in the society. In other words, aspects of identity formation of females may be traced to the social, cultural and religious environment which nurtures the developing child and engenders a sense of self in that child. (qtd. in Gatobu 7)

Erik Erikson emphasises the impact of the social discourses on the construction of identity. He examines the socio-cultural nurturing of a child which forms the identity. Therefore, cultural ideology attaches its influences with every individual. As Hogg and Abram have defined: "Identity is people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (Hogg and Abram 2). Stuart Hall a well renowned British Marxist sociologist describes in his book *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*:

Identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not who we are or where we came from, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves.(3)

The term identity refers mainly to futuristic to social conventions to challenge the struggle in which a person is enduring the situation. A subject encapsulates all the historical background, languages and cultural aspects in order to describe his identity. In order to describe the complexity of identity Amartya Sen a famous economist and philosopher encapsulates in his book *Identity and Violence*:

A person's citizenship, residence, geographic origin, gender, class, politics, profession, employment, food habits, sports interests, taste in music, social commitments, etc., make us members of a variety of groups. Each of these collectivises, to all of which this person simultaneously belongs, gives her a particular identity. None of them can be taken to be the person's only identity or singular membership category.(34)

Thus, Amartya Sen explores the cultural politics of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, citizenship and other social categories in the construction of identity. Thereby, Sen describes the historical elements of a subject for his or her identification which fix their identity. The concept of identity can be seen as the interface between subjective positions, social and cultural situations. However, identity gives us a location in the world and presents a link between us and the society in which we live. As Parmesh Shahani in his book *Gay Bombay* says:

Each of us lives with a variety of potentially contradictory identities. Behind the quest for identity are different conflicting values. We are trying to express who we are and what we believe and what we desire. The problem is that these desires are often patently in conflict not only between communities but within individuals themselves. (62)

There are different kinds of dimensions of identity in the literature which endeavor the person to give the different characteristics in the society. Erving Goffman a Canadian-American sociologist and Social Psychologist opines that there are different forms of identity as Personal identity, Social identity, and Ego identity. Social identity is called a categorical identity that persons have by virtue of their membership of social categories. Ego identity refers to a subjective sense of who we are or who we believe ourselves to be. Self and Identity both are constructed in parallel to the societal norms.

As Goffman describes the concept in details: "Social identity is virtual social identity. Stigma is based on a discrepancy between actual and virtual social identity, an attribute that we perceive as a shortcoming – 'in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous or weak" (12). Personal identity describes the unique characteristics of a person. It is about the biography of a

person. Because there are a lot of signs and stigma's which are related to our past and present. Goffman describes about the personal identity: "By personal identity, I have in mind positive marks or identity pegs, and the unique combination of life-history items that come to be attached to the individual with the help of these pegs for his identity" (Goffman 74). He describes these three concepts in details:

The concept of social identity allowed us to consider stigmatization. The Concept of Personal identity allowed us to consider the role of information control in stigma management. The idea of ego identity allows us to consider what the individual feels about the Stigma. (130)

Goffman explains three concepts of identity which are related to our belongingness. An Individual identifies by his/her historical background and his / her behavioural characteristics. As Erik Erikson explains "Identity comprises not only 'who you think you are' but also who you act as being in interpersonal and intergroup interactions and social recognition or otherwise that these receive from individuals or groups" (34). Erikson describes identity as the representation of the self- image. Identity is the perception of sameness in time and it is connected to the perception of others. Identity develops through experiences in the time of crisis and contradictions which every individual has to face in order to raise his or her voice to know their individual self. Identity is a description of an individual's birth, name, profession, and all the agencies which are related to that particular being. Society constructs identity by the cultural aspects that they can be fit in a particular role which they have decided for every individual. Wherein, society already perceives their image for a male and female.

Subjectivity

The concept of self has emerged in the anthology that brings the concept of identity and after that subjectivity came to enlighten the society that who we are and what is the importance of self. Subjectivity is a philosophical term which relates to consciousness, individuality, reality, truth, feelings, belief, desires. As Robinson opines in her book *Engendering the Subject: Gender and Self-Representation in Contemporary Women's Fiction*:

Subjectivity, as an ongoing process of engagement in social and discursive practices, not some immanent kernel of identity that is expressed through that same engagement. It is not constructed, once and for all, at some locatable point in the individual's history; rather it is a continuous process of production and transformation. (Robinson 11)

Likewise, Poststructuralist philosophers Michel Foucault and Gille Deleuze's on subjectivity describes in Neeru Tondon's Book *Feminine Psyche A postmodern critique* that "Our Subjectivity is constituted by the shifting discourses of power, which endlessly speak through us. The subject is not sovereign rather the subject is decentred in that its consciousness is being constructed from positions outside of itself (qtd. in Tondon 38). The self originates in the mind of a person and it characterises the individual's consciousness of self that is called subjectivity. As Henderson King Donna describes consciousness in her journal "Feminist consciousness: Perspectives on Women's experience", she says: "Consciousness is rising involves the recognition of social, political, economic and personal constraints on freedom and is the forum in which decisions or actions are made that will challenge those constraints and initiate change" (63). Therefore, women consciously confine themselves from social economic and political because males conquer these agencies by their male dominance in society.

Therefore, these constraints illuminate the protest against male dominance which demeans women's entity. Defining 'self' Judith Pamela Butler an American Philosopher describes that "a strategy of domination that pits the 'I' against an 'Other' and, once that separation is effected, creates an artificial set of questions about the knowledge and recoverability of that Other" (Butler 369). She denied the concept of others which restricts the emancipation of women. She argues that our identity is tied up with the values that give structure and direction to our lives.

Therefore, subjectivity is a convenient term because these two terms are interconnected. Identity is about the feeling of oneself, dynamic construction, individuality, self-respect, freedom. Therefore, in literary form Subjectivity is as text when it's being textual analysed and it becomes an identity. As Amartya Sen describes subjectivity "whether we are considering our identities as we ourselves

see them or as others see us, we choose within particular constraints" (45). Amartya Sen explains that subjectivity critiques his/her identity or other's perception of his/her identity. It can be said that subjectivity is about the consciousness about identity. In her book *A Literature of Their Own*, an American critic, feminist Elaine Showalter claims that:

The female imagination cannot be treated by literary historians as a romantic or Freudian abstraction, It is a product of a delicate network of influences operating in time, a language and in fixed arrangements of words on a page, a form that itself is subject to a network of influences and conventions, including the operations of the marketplace(15).

It is a construct of mind which often appears as inner. It is a generalisation which constitutes recognition of an individual within himself or herself. Articulation is the power to describe one's identity to relate her to her conventional aspects. Therefore, Catherine Belsey a British literary critic explains in her book *The Feminist Reader Essay in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*:

It is a language which provides the possibility of subjectivity because it is the language which enables the speaker to posit himself or herself as 'I,' as the subject of a sentence. It is through language that people constitute themselves as subjects. (595)

Heinz Lichtenstein describes in his book *Dilemma of Human Identity*, society depends on the stable identities of individuals. When the cultural storehouse of available roles fails to fit the identity themes of enough people, mismatched persons suffer an identity crisis. Although everyone has an invariant early formed identity, Lichtenstein says in his book, *The Dilemma of Human Identity* "loss of identity is a specifically human danger and maintenance of identity is a specifically human necessity" (77). Therefore, subjectivity is about what the person knows about himself/herself and what the other people know about himself/herself. Identity is about the authentic recognition of a person by other people. Therefore, subjectivity and identity, two terms are interrelated which are constructed in society.

Identity as a Fictitious Construction

Identity is a ubiquitous issue which is interlinked with social norms, gender, and sexuality. It is a fictitious construction because it is fabricated in the society. Identity is socially produced, socially constructed and worked out in people's everyday social lives. Jurden Straub in his book *Narration, Identity, and Historical Consciousness* describes, "Identity is however still considered to be a social norm in postmodern societies" (280). It is generally assumed that there are two genders i.e. male and female. They are part of any social justice because if there is some kind of injustice, they are exploited as socially, culturally, economically, and politically. When it comes to thinking about identities it cannot adequately address the issues of what identity is and how it is possible. Joan Scott describes in John Rajchman's book *The Identity In Question* that such a categorical approach tends to naturalise identity. She writes:

People are discriminated against because they are different when in fact, I would argue, it is the other way around: difference and salience of different identities are produced by discrimination, a process that establishes the superiority or the typicality or the universality of some terms of the inferiority of atypicality or particularity of others. (qtd. in Rajchman 14-15)

Thus, people suffer from complex because of discrimination. For example, women feel inferior because of the power and privilege which men enjoy over women and women, who are exploited in every way and they do not have any power in social, economic, and political affairs. Females have been judged by their biological structure and these differences construct their social identities. Therefore, a woman has to suffer as she has no identity of her own. As Berger and Luckmann opine in his book *Social Construction of Reality* identity is the interplay of the organism, individual consciousness and social structure" (194). Society imposes all the customs and conventions on the females which dominate their psyche and social freedom. Society differentiates females from men due to their biological differences. This misleading and partial understanding give rise to inequality in the society that is rooted in people's perception. Judith Butler in her *Gender Trouble* claims:

Women constitute a paradox if not a contradiction within the discourse of identity itself, women are the sex which not 'one', within a language pervasively masculinist, phallogocentric language women constitute the representable. (14)

Identity is formed by social processes and is continuously maintained, modified or even reshaped by social relations and social culture. Berger–Luckmandefine identity as the interplay of “organism”, “individual consciousness” and “social structure” (194). Elaine Showalter argues that “woman’s identity is not defined solely by her relation to a male world and a male literary tradition. She considers the bonds between women powerful and crucial factors in women’s lives (201). A woman’s life is a mixture of responsibilities, tradition, culture and male domination which make her inferior and superior. In this way, her identity formed in the patriarchal society.

Patriarchy

Patriarchy literally means male domination of a person in a family. In the social set up all the roles are constructed in order to be performed by males and females. Sylvia Theresa Walby a British Sociologist describes in her book “*Theorising Patriarchy*” calls it “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (Walby 27). They consider women as child producing machines and on this basis they exploit them. Gerda Lerner an eminent American Historian describes in her book *The Creation of Patriarchy*:

Patriarchy means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power. (239)

Gerda Lerner explains the manifestations and agencies which are constructed under the male dominance in the society which dominates women and children in the society. Wherein a woman cannot avail their right in society. Thus, it is important to understand patriarchy in terms of its multiplicity, complexities, and

dynamics. Sheila Rowbotham, a British sociologist and feminist writer opines in her book *The Trouble Patriarchy* also argues:

The term patriarchy necessarily implies a conception of women's oppression that is universalistic, a historic and essentially biologicistic and that it incorrectly leads to a search for a single cause of women's oppression either in a base super-structure model or as a quest for ultimate origins from capitalist relations. (30)

Sheila Rowbotham describes that patriarchy is mainly considered as male domination of a man upon a woman. Because in either way as in capitalist or in the domestic way a woman is the one who has been subjugated politically, economically, physically, and mentally. Therefore, it emphasises that patriarchy oppresses woman capitalists take advantage of it. As Bhasin Khan explains in his book *What is Patriarchy that*:

Feminism is an awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression at the material and ideological levels of women's labour, fertility and sexuality, in the family, at the place of work and in society in general, and conscious action by women and men to transform the present situation"(Khan 3).Bhasin Khan describes that feminism makes an effort to spread awareness for the reasons which are demeaning female's emancipation.

In this context, Zillah Eisenstein in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism* argues that 'male supremacy and capitalism are the core relations which determine oppression of women' She defines patriarchy as a "sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege'(Eisenstein 17). All powers are in the hands of man which he enjoys in the name of the on-going social structure. Kate Millet's theory of subordination argues that "women are a dependent sex class under patriarchal domination" (Millet 77). Gender discrimination is also a prominent issue in Indian society. The woman is considered as the weaker sex who creates the gender politics that divides the powers. Thus, Wallaby describes the system of economic power in the society which dominates the woman. "In this system women's labour power, women's reproduction, women's sexuality, women's mobility and property and other economic resources – are under patriarchal control" (Walby 20). In Indian patriarchal social structure, a man is the ruler of his family who dominates

the other for his honour, respect, culture and society. Likewise, he deconstructs the ideologies which are related to gender politics and discriminates between the male child and female child which make gender inequality.

Gender Equality

Gender equality refers to imparting equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to man and woman. It refers to the social identity of men and women. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relations between men and women where a woman is inferior and subordinate to man. As Butler describes in her *Gender Trouble* “Gender has to do not with how females really are, but with the way that a given culture or subculture seem them how they are culturally constructed” (98). Gender analysis, however, is closely related to power analysis and recognised as an important conceptual tool in addressing different vulnerabilities and predicament of women arising out of the social norms and customs as a woman is the only one who is ignored and exploited in the patriarchal society.

Therefore, a German writer Von Hippel rejected the idea that in Bryson Valerie’s book *Feministic Political Theory* women’s exclusion from civil and political rights could be justified in terms of biological terms. He says, “it was a woman, who had made women what they were, and he demanded that men and women be given equal rights and education for citizenship rather than for their traditional roles” (qtd. in Bryson13). Culture consists of beliefs, behaviors, objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society. According to Judith Butler, “identity is performative thus gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the dead” (25). She defines gender as the “repeated stylisation of the body” (33). Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values contribute to society.

Thus, culture includes many societal aspects: language, customs, values, norms, rules, tools, technologies, products, organisations, and institutions. Human identity is constructed and all significations take place within the circle of compulsion to repeat. She offers hope by asserting that agency “is to be located within the possibility a variation on that repetition” (125). Therefore, socially constructed identities and roles performed by us and gender identities provide an

opportunity to analyse and challenge the ideologies and restricted identities to change the monotony. Michel Haar is a very prominent critique in the gender identities and about the psychological aspect. He criticises the gender inequalities because these are just because of the language which is constructed in the society by the patriarchal ideology:

The destruction of logic by means of its genealogy brings with it as well as the ruin the psychological categories drive from the illusion of substantial identity. But this illusion goes back basically to a superstition that deceives not only common sense but also philosophers...the belief in language and more precisely, in the truth of grammatical categories. It was grammar that whereas rather the thoughts that came to meet bottom faith in grammar simply conveys the cause of one's thoughts. The subject the self, the individual are just so many false concepts since they transform into substances fictitious unities having at the start only a linguistic reality.(Haar 17-18)

In this way, Michel describes the linguistic reality in the gender difference because language plays an important role to construct these differences. Individuals create so many concepts for males and females which describes their identities. Simon de Beauvoir describes in her book *The Second Sex* woman's situation in the society says: "The situation of a woman is that – She is a free and autonomous being like all creature – "nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other"(Beauvoir 45). Society constructs the identities when a child is born, parents fix the rules for their children; they don't have their own identities. Patriarchy has set a different set of rules for girls and boys in which they have to conform throughout their life e.g. a girl should wear a different kind of clothes from boys. Judith Butler points out gender discrimination:

Gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out

“gender” from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained.(Butler 6)

As John Stuart Mill describes the patriarchal mindset and says in his book: “Women are strenuously taught to repress all aspirations as contrary to the properties of their sex” (442). Society imposes all these traditions and cultural restraints and customs which they have to adopt in any case. As Gayatri Spivak, an Indian Scholar writes in her article “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

Between Patriarchy and imperialism, subject constitution and object formation, the figure of a woman disappear, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling, when the displacement figuration of a ‘Third world Woman’ caught between tradition and modernisation. (6)

Patriarchy is also the part of conventional realms in this way the slavish nature of a woman is actually a patriarchal manifestation. In the postmodern world, the Indian middle-class woman is struggling between tradition and modernity. Female's dreams and aspirations demeaning traditional society. Being a postmodern woman there are obstacles which are letting her down. In this context, Gayatri Spivak explains the woman's silence between patriarchy and imperialism. The man-made society determines the behavior of a woman. As J Bernard An American Psychologist argues in his article “The Good provider roles” , Its Rise and Fall” that:

It is not so much the specific kinds of workmen and women do – they have always varied from time to time and place to place – but the simple fact that the sexes do different kinds of work, whatever it is, which is in and of itself important. The division of labour by sex means that the workgroup becomes also a sex group. The very nature of maleness and femaleness becomes embedded in the sexual division of labour. One’s sex and one’s work are part of one another. One’s work defines one’s gender. (Bernard 3)

Following the trends of Post-colonial feminism and the mode of third world fiction, feministic writers are trying to merge these two concepts for the equal

rights of women and their own identity. In this context, Mary Wollstonecraft in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* says, “women must challenge society’s norms of female inferiority and must strive to articulate their own identities and roles in the societies”(67). As Mary Wollstonecraft challenges the societal norms and tradition, therefore, a female is endeavouring to establish her own identity. In the post-modern world, females are questing their identity instead of lurking between tradition and modernity.

Female Identity

Female identity is a process for the most fundamental of these differences. It relates to self-image, self-esteem, individuality and usually refers to the individuality of the women protagonists who submit themselves under the forced norms of the male-dominated society and their families. As Christine Gomes describes the difficult condition of a female in the patriarchal society in her book *On-going Quest of Bharati Mukherji from Expatriation to Immigration*:

Women’s struggle for self-realisation and self-definitions quest for her identity, her pursuit of freedom, equality, and transcendence her rebellion and protest against oppression at every level. Sex role, Stereotyping in society, debates over the double moral standard in society, various aspect of female experience such as domestic violence, rape, pregnancy, abortion, motherhood, being single, and so on. The evolving of feminine consciousness out of female experience, the internal conflict and ambivalent of women forced to choose between feminist goals and traditional feminine goals between total independence and the need for romantic love and emotional fulfilment, the bonding between women forming sisterhood or a mother-daughter relationship and the alienation of women as an outsider, as the object as the other. (92)

Christine Gomes opines the struggle of a female in the patriarchal society i.e violence, rape humiliation, domestic violence, discrimination etc. An American Psychologist Nancy Chodorow’s explanation about female identity in her book *Feminism and Psychoanalytical Theory*, she gives a descriptive generalisation of sexism, patriarchy or male supremacy to analyse how sexual asymmetry and

inequality are constituted, reproduced and changed. As Valerie Bryson, a British Political Scientist encapsulates women's situation in her book *Feminist Political Theory* that "Whatever system of the labour....whatever system of governmentunder every vicissitude of man's condition he has always retained woman's slave."(196). She further explains women's suppression is rooted in a traditional society in religious doctrine and practices, within the education and legal system, and within families. Male domination in a woman's life is a natural phenomenon in a patriarchal society. Women are struggling on their own to break the shackles of their traditional position and search for their identity as an individual, rather than sacrificing at every step for the sake of their husbands and children. `

Traditionally, a woman has been known to bear primary responsibility for the well-being of her family. She is discriminated against systematically and deprived of access to resources such as education, health care, services, jobs etc. According to Millet in her *Sexual Politics* "Sex is determined biologically, whereas gender is cultural, socially, psychologically constituted through sex-role stereotyping and historical conditioning" (13). Psychological discourse also plays a major role to demonstrate the image of a woman, who because of the social changes has to accept all the deviations which have been imparted on her. She prefers to stay silent and this discreet thinking goes to her unconsciousness and this affects her psyche. Anita Myles in her book *Feminism and the Post-modernist Indian Women* rightly points out:

A woman's experience of life as a member of a gender-based society formulates her psyche. Moreover, she is bound by certain other factors such as her individual circumstances, societies expectations related to age, class, race, etc. Thus each women experience of life is different and therefore, unique. (95)

Therefore, Anita explains the position of woman in the gender-based society and she survives according to the patriarchal structure. She has to change her identity as a daughter, sister, wife, mother etc. Elaine Showalter, a feminist critic too seek insight into self-definition and says "Throughout history and across national boundaries in the recurring images, themes and plots that emerge from social, psychological and aesthetic in male-dominated culture" (6). In society, a

woman does not have her own identity because for woman all the tradition and way of talking and behaviour in society is constructed by the social set up. Carolyn Gold an American Author Heilbrun in her book *Reinventing Womanhood* writes:

Successful women are 'male-identified' but that it is a failure for a woman to take her identity from her man. Women never form a self because they never have undergone an identity to lose; the price of wifhood is abandonment to self. (103)

In the patriarchal society woman is the one who has been the victim and she has always been associated with her father and husband's name. Therefore Beauvoir in her book *Second Sex* says:

A Woman is defined in relation to men and not as an independent separate entity, she is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is absolute, she is the other. (307)

A woman is always identified with reference to man. The Indian woman has been a silent sufferer of the old traditional system. Education imparts a sense of individuality amongst women and brings a new awareness to the society. In this context, Virginia Wolf encapsulates the whole situation:

Intellectual freedom depends upon material things. Poetry depends on intellectual freedom. And women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time, Women have had less intellectual freedom. (45)

Virginia wolf explains the importance of education for a woman she explains that a woman should be educated to know her rights and her identity. Similarly, Heilbrun says in her book *Reinventing Womanhood*:

A woman must learn to call whatever she is or does female. For whatever she is does is female. Ultimately, there are no male models, there are only models of selfhood from which woman

choose to learn. The hardest in the life of the woman is to learn to say, whatever I am is a woman. (140)

Therefore, Heilburn says that women should recognise their self to establish their status in the male-dominated society. For that feminist writers have been trying to write their point of view in the feministic theories which are very necessary for their emancipation. To describe the female identity is important for a woman to know about herself. Being an educated middle-class woman they are silent, isolated, frustrated in their families. Female identity is bound with the internalisation of social, political and religious aspects. As Simon de Beauvoir and Anne Kiome Gatobu describe that the female identity is reliant on the psychological formation of the self. Therefore, the exploitation humiliation and violence make them feel inferior throughout her life. Thus, these social taboos construct and impose the traditional values on them. Sometimes, while performing their prescribed role in the domestic sphere they didn't recognise their individuality. Therefore, postmodern feminist writers pen down for the equal right to man and woman.

Feminism

The term feminism was given by the utopian socialist Charles Fourier and was first used in English in 1890 in association with the movement for equal political and legal rights for women. The word feminism seems to refer to an intense awareness of identity as a woman and an interest in feminine problems. The subjugation of woman is a central fact of history and it is the main cause of all psychological disorder in society. According to Janet Richards in her *book Woman Writer's talking*:

The essence of feminism has a strong fundamental case intended to mean only that there are excellent reasons for thinking that woman suffers from systematic social injustice because of their sex the proposition is to be regarded as constitutional feminism” The theory of feminism is essentially linked to the movement for equality of the sexes and the end to discrimination against women. (3)

Feminism is a critical theory which aims to transform the social structure with powerful ideologies. It helps to understand the social institutions, male domination, and socio-political ideologies which dominate the woman. The woman is suffering due to her sex, gender and as weak human being. Feminism is not only a movement but also a consciousness about self-identity, male domination, and freedom. As Sushila Singh in her Article "Recent Trend in Feminist thought: A Tour de Horizon" in *Feminism and Recent Fiction in English* says that: "As a Philosophy of life, it seeks to discover and change the more subtle and deep-seated causes of women's oppression. It is a concept of raising the consciousness of an entire culture" (22). As Peter Barry describes the movement of feminism and social change. He says:

The women movement of 1960 was no, of course, the start of feminism. Rather, it was a renewal of an old tradition thought and action already possessing its classic books which had diagnosed the problem of women's equality in society and proposed solutions. (Barry 84)

Feminism, in other words, follows the critical project with action to bring about social change. Feminism aims at liberation and makes it political. Feminist theory often uses narratives and histories to challenge and improve existing theories or to propose new ones. The word Feminism refers to an intense awareness of identity as a woman and an interest in feminine problems. The subjugation of woman is a central fact of history and it is the main cause behind the chaos in society.

Feminist theory devises strategies to transform social structures. The strong wave in the 1960 and 1970 helped to theory a woman's discourse. Margaret Homans has rightly pointed out, "the concept of feminism raises fundamental queries about reading, writing and the teaching of literature" (38). It operates as an interdisciplinary tool for social and cultural analysis and as political practice feminism has transformed the accuracy of life and literature. In the agonistic definition, feminism is seen as the struggle against all forms of patriarchal and gender aggression, such as oppositional definition projects

feminism as the necessary resistance to the patriarchal power. Chaman Nahal noted critic observes the basic concept of feminism as:

I define feminism as a mode of existence in which the woman is free of the dependence syndrome. There is dependence syndrome whether it is husband, father, the community or a religious group. When women will free themselves of the dependence syndrome and lead a normal life, my idea of feminism materialises. (17)

Feminism is a struggle for equality of women, an effort to make women become like men. Feminism is seen as the struggle against all the forms of patriarchal set up in society. Feminists not only demand equal rights but also assert their own identity over men. They want women to be self- dependent, to take their own decisions, and to free themselves from the patriarchal hierarchy and cultural bond. Feminists highlight the battle against sexism to the battle against capitalism or that against legal and political reform that is liberal feminism. They consider the sexist subordination of women as the fundamental form of oppression. The feminist agenda of the 19th and early 20th centuries focused on the acquisition of a few political rights and liberty for women, such as the right of the married woman to own the property and enter into the contracts, the right of defendants to have a woman on juries and the crucial right to vote. As Simone de, Beauvoir writes in *The Second Sex*:

The term masculine and feminine are used systematically only as a matter of form, as on legal papers. Actually, the relation of the sexes is not quite as if that of the two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and negative whereas, the woman represents only the negative. (45)

Feminism is more concerned with women and wants to establish a new identity for women to understand the female predicament. Normally, a woman's image is observed from two angles, what she is and what she has to be. A woman cannot escape the fact that she is a woman. As Cheri Register Argues:

the art or more specifically literary works are responsible for providing 'role –models' for this identity and that by portraying

women whose identities are not dependent on men they are able to create a new language, definitions and symbolic.”(Register 236)

Society has constructed a rigid role model for her and has labelled woman variously. Males oppress females and treat them as others and as property. Kelly Cherry an American Author defines in her Book *The Woman Who* that “Feminism has a long History and can, arguably, be treated back to the 15 century” (Kelly, 45). Rowbotham also describes that “though women’s resistance to subordination certainly predates the emergence of feminism as a fully articulated ideology and practice” (qtd in. Sharma69). Women have been treated very badly from many years and their history is described in way of waves. In this way, feminism has started with successions of waves. The first wave of feminism is located between the mid 19th and in the early 20th century. First-wave feminism arouses in the context of industrial society and liberal politics that is connected to both the women’s right and socialist feminist.

First-wave feminism continued to influence feminism in western and eastern societies. It focused struggles primarily on gaining legal rights such as the right to vote and property rights. According to Simon de Beauvoir “first woman to take up her pen in defense of her sex” (Beauvoir 16). She has complained about the women’s right to vote. In this way, John Stuart Mill in collaboration with Harriet Taylor in their book *The Subjection of Women* says that.... “Women should be entitled to the citizenship and political rights and liberties enjoyed by men”. (6). In this way, Walby comments on it and says “First-wave feminism was a large multifaceted, long and large effective phenomenon” (149). The first known publications by women that referred to a demand for equality between men and women were published in the 15th century, but what is referred to as first-wave feminism really began in earnest in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

This wave of feminism ended when women made some legal gains in North America and when some women won the right to vote between 1917 and 1920. In Canada, Aboriginal women living on reserves would not win the right to vote until 1960. Liberal feminism and Marxist feminism are connected to the first wave feminism. They have a basic belief in freedom. They represent the distinction between private and public spheres of activity maintained by capitalists for their own interests. The writers who belong to this mode are Karl Marx and Engels Gill

Man and “Whatever system of the labour....whatever system of governmentunder every vicissitude of man’s condition he has always retained woman his slave.”(196). Eisenstein also says that in my understanding of the term feminist:

I see an element of visionary futurist thoughts. This encompasses the concept of social transformation that as part of the eventual liberation of women with change all human relationships for the better...Although Certainly about women, their experience and condition....Feminism is also fundamentally about a man and social change.(6)

He explains the equity in the society which brings the fundamental individualism in a human being. In this way, feminism brings the second wave which is related to the broad range of issues in the 1960s and 1970s and early '80s. At that time the prominent issues were rape, domestic violence, equity, pornography and reproductive. These issues still exist in society. The second wave feminism was the fight for reproductive choice and also for access to birth control. In 1988 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada’s abortion law for women’s liberation. Radical feminism correlates with the second wave of feminism. It also conceptualises all oppression of culture that is male-dominated. It is also a combination of psychoanalysis feminism and neo-Marxism. As Juliet Mitchella British Psychoanalyst says:

The freedom theory of women’s natural dependency and sexual frigidity was at first denounced, then later rearticulated as a mimicry of the unholy alliance between capitalism and patriarchy that designates sexism as the particular character of women’s oppression.(Mitchel8)

It profoundly desecrated women’s right for their own life and freedom from all the patriarchal system of society, culture, myth and tradition which bound the women’s identity. Juliet Mitchell explores women’s condition in society, relates with Marxism and says, “gender relations are a part of the superstructure and particularly located in the ideological level where capitalism in the economic level”(412).

After one year later they to introduce a new abortion law failed in the Senate due to a tie vote. During this time frame, both the United States (in 1963) and Canada (in 1967) launched investigations into the status of women and

through the subsequent reports made public the depth and breadth of the inequalities experienced by women. Katie Roiphe in *The Morning After Sex, Fear and Feminism* (1993), employs the backlash argument to attack second-wave feminism. She asserts that feminist preoccupations with presenting women as victims are self-defeating. She claims:

Feminists are closer to their backlash than they think. The image that emerges from feminist preoccupation with rape and sexual harassment is that of women as victims... This image of a delicate woman bears a striking resemblance to that fifties ideal my mother and the other women of her generation fought so hard to get away from..... (qtd. in Gamble 46)

She represents personal, social and psychological possibilities collapsed, and they worked and marched, shouted and wrote, to make her irrelevant for their daughter. But here she is again, with her pure intentions and her wide eyes. Only this time it is feminists themselves who are breathing new life into her.

Feminist critics such as Elaine Showalter and Helene Cixous have introduced exclusively female branches in feminist critical and feminist writing respectively in this period. Gynocriticism put forward by Elaine Showalter is a form of feminist criticism which restricts itself to the study of women's writings and the writings related to the female experience.' *Ecriture Feminine*' proposed by Helene Cixous is a branch of French feminism, which, signifies a particular kind of female writing which undermines logic and rationality of the dominant male order. In this way, second-wave feminism brings all these writers to come forward with their new conception.

Third-wave Feminism is a term identified with several diverse anxieties of feminist activity and study. The movement arose with the rejoinder to the perceived failures and criticism against the second wave of feminism during the 1960s to 1980s. Therefore is an explosion realization that a woman may have many colours as ethnicities, nationalisms, religions and cultural background. It has not any single idea but this wave came with globalisation which can transform women's situation in patriarchal society. Third-wave theory usually incorporates elements of queer theory; anti-racism and woman-of-color consciousness; womanism; girl power; post-colonial; post-modernism; transnationalism; eco-

feminism; individualist feminism; new feminist theory, transgender politics, and a rejection of the gender binary.

Third-world feminism is focused on the poststructuralist ideas that promote the difference between gender and sexuality. Cultural feminism is also related to this wave and the idea that there is a contradiction between mind and body which is proved by the mental capacities of women. Kathryn Cirksena and Lisa Cuklanz in their article "Male is to Female as to" they describe that "Since women were thoughtless mentally capable than men, and were normally associated with nature and thus with animal and physical world, they were devalued as less human than men" (33). The modern feminist theory highlights the reaction between social position, experience and understanding of the world. Cultural feminism also related to the post-modern feminism. Sushila Singh describes in her feminist thought in Indian Women Novelists that " Julia Kristeva suggests third world feminism is to operate a space which deconstructs all identity, all binary opposition".(60)

Third-world feminism is tied up with the effects of globalisation and complex redistribution of power. It is also the discrimination of women's interests and perspectives and the breakdown of patriarchy. Today patriarchy is just one of the hierarchies which keep females down, oppressed by the traditional system. Writers like Mary Wollstonecraft in the *Vindication of the Rights of Women* rejected the established view that women are naturally weaker or inferior to men. She claims that the unequal nature of gender relation has been built because of the lack of education that kept women in a secondary position. A male author like J.S Miller in *The Subjection of Women* and Friedrich Engels in *The Origin of The Family* spoke about women and stressed upon the need to rethink the role of women and social oppression against them. In the early twentieth century, Olive Schreiner, Virginia Woolf and later Simon De Beauvoir wrote on the gender questions from the perspective of an oriented towards issues like education, marriage, economics, sexuality and morals. Their work exposes the ways in which patriarchy abuses sexual politics. They opined that women must take charge of their own choice, they need not accept the roles and identities enforced on them by patriarchy. Ellen E.Jordan observes in the context of third-wave feminism:

The English feminist endowed the New Women with her hostility to men, her questioning of marriage, her determination to escape from that restriction of home life and her belief that education could make a woman capable of leading a financially self-sufficient single and yet fulfilling life.(Jordan 23)

Third-wave feminism tries to emancipate the women's status in the male dominant society. As Alice Walker Opines: "This Life we save is our own" (Walker 33). In late 1980 and 1990, philosopher and theories began rethinking this view of gender and identity. Women writers in all literature have managed to shape out space for themselves by means of the effective portrayal of women's condition in Indian society. They focus on the inequalities that woman are subject to within the narrow confines set out for them by society. They address issues such as marriage, divorce, sexuality, and women's education and those issues that directly affect women's lives. Writers such as Virginia Wolf, Simon De Beauvoir, Munshi Premchand, Jainendra Kumar, Rajender Singh Bedi, Bhasham Sahni, Rajni Pannikar, Jasbir Jain, Krishna Sobti, and Amrita Pritam attempted to deal with problems that women face in Indian society. They bring out women spaces that were conceived according to their own social visions. They discuss their frustration and humiliation and other social problems that affect the daily lives of women and make it difficult for them to survive.

Review of Related Literature

Literature has always been a mirror to society. Women find literature the most expressive form of art, which is true to women's experience. A number of writers have arrived on the literary scenes and have set out making new turns into the world of women empowerment. They have emancipated women to show female identity in their works. Feminists have endeavoured to elaborate their theories, novels, short stories and poetry to emancipate women from the social constraint and traditional foundation to live independently. They enlighten the female identity in literature through their works. As Raymond Williams in his book *Marxism and Literature* (1977) claims that the corporate culture has always a dominant woman.

In 1949, Simon De Beauvoir's work *The Second Sex* radically questioned the status and role of women in the conservative patriarchal society. Her work exposes the ways in which patriarchy abuses the sexual difference to create structures of disparity and exposes the facts of sexual politics. As she says "woman is not born but, becomes one" (Beauvoir 237). She opined that women must take charge of their own choice, instead of being the undesirable; lesser other they must become subjects in their own right. They need not be confined to the roles and identities enforced on them by patriarchy.

Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* describes how cultural discourse reflects a systematised subjugation and exploitation of women. Millet also introduces some of the fundamental terms, such as "patriarchal," which gained considerable significance in feminist literary studies. According to Millet "patriarchal" is a term where male-dominated structures and social arrangements elaborate on the oppression of women. It also elaborates on "androcentric" and the "Sexual Politics" shows especially reflecting the politics of female identity in literature.

Most notably in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft argues that well-educated women will be good wives and mothers and ultimately contribute positively to the nation. Wollstonecraft argues that women ought to have an education commensurate with their position in society and then proceed to redefine that position, claiming that women are essential to the nation because they educate their children and because they could be "companions" to their husbands rather than mere wives.

Jasbir Jain in *Women's Writing: Text and Context* focuses on how women's writing has slowly come into its own for several reasons. She expresses our attention to feminine reality as well as to its significance as a means of bringing about an awareness of this reality. It is in this context that she analyses Krishna Sobti's bold women protagonists in her novels. In *Mitro Marjani*, there is a portrayal of a very powerful strong woman character that embodies female desire and elemental sexual expression. Sobti discusses an extra-marital relationship, rebellious nature of woman which is perceived negatively by the family members in the novel.

Hindi writer Mannu Bhandari's collection of short stories presents a dimension to the social and cultural picture of women in Indian family and society. Her stories, *Saza* and *EK Ladki Ki Kahani* provides the socio-cultural values, attitudes and practices which cripple the personalities of the female psyche. The writer portrays the middle-class women who are often educated but couldn't use their knowledge living in a society. The marginalisation of woman as daughter, wife, and mother is indicated in her stories. They are suppressed socially, physically, psychologically.

Rohini Aggarwal a feminist critique in her book *Stri Lekhan: Swapan Aur Sankalp* writes about the capabilities, boundaries and inner conflicts of women which are suppressed by the Indian Socio-cultural setup. In this book, she tries to find out the factors which force the woman to be a woman. This book is a woman's depiction from a woman's point of view. She highlights the patriarchal society in which women are meant to remain silent and the strategies to deviates them from their empowerment and their individual identity.

Judith Kegan in her article "On Female Identity and Writing by Women" writes that feminist psychology can help us through the concept of female identity writing by a woman. It can explain the diverse ways in which writing by woman differs from writing by man. She said that in order to reach a theory of identity, we must first adopt the identity theory as constituted by male theorists. In this way, she combines the works of Erik Erikson, Nancy Carolyn in her article. In recent years, the scholarly literature has taken a different turn, becoming at once more attentive to consideration previously ignored or minimised. There is greater awareness, for instance, of the manner in which women were affected by gender discrimination and violence. Women scholars and writers, in particular, have focused on the identity crisis of women.

The title of this research work is *Exploring Female Identity in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg*. This research will make a comparative study of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg which project modern Indian women's search for her identity and role in the family and society. Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938 in Dharwad, Karnataka and is the daughter of the late Adya Rangachar "Sriranga," a famous Kannada

playwright. Her career began with the publication of a collection of short stories entitled "The Legacy" in 1978. So far, she has published ten novels- *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980), *If I Die Today* (1982), *Come up and be Dead* (1983), *Roots and Shadows* (1983), *That Long Silence* (1988), *The Binding Vine* (1992), *A Matter of Time* (1996), *Small Remedies* (2001) and *Moving On* (2004), *The Country of Deceit* (2008). In addition to these, she has also published several books for children in English and has also written the screenplay of the Hindi feature film *Drishti*. She won the Thirumati Rangamal Prize for *Roots and Shadows* and the Sahitya Akademi Award for *That Long Silence* in 1990.

Her first novel *The Dark Holds No Terror*, her first novel, explores the myth of man's supremacy and a myth of a woman being an exemplar of all virtues. *The* protagonist of this novel Saru finds her marital condition unbearable and feels the harassment of a trapped animal. Her grandmother has also been deserted by her husband, "Had never complained and had accepted her plight as her luck, believing that it was written on my forehead." (62). Saru is also disturbed in her life as she says, "Silence becomes a habit with her". (181)

She faces gender discrimination in her home too because her mother loves her brother and hates her. When he drowned she blamed her and says: You killed him. Why you didn't die? Why are you alive, when he is dead? This novel is all about exploitation, sexist discrimination, and alienation. Her novel *A Matter of Time* explores the intricate relationship within an extended family, encompassing three generations of men and women. At the heart of the novel is eighteen-year-old Aru, struggling to understand her father's desertion and her mother's indifference and in the course of a few turbulent months forging an entirely unexpected relationship that is destined to change the course of her life. It particularly deals with the theme of the quest for female identity. The complexities of man-woman relationships especially in the context of marriage, the trauma of disturbed adolescence and the attempt to break traditional roles in which women are trapped in the male-dominated society.

Small Remedies of Shashi Deshpande is one of the inspirational novels in which carries lots of social taboos. It explores the lives of two women, one obsessed with music and the other a passionate believer in communism who

breaks away from their families to seek fulfillment in public life. Savitri Indorekar, born into an orthodox Hindu family, elopes with her Muslim lover and accompanist, Ghulam Saab, to pursue a career in music. Gentle, stronger-willed Leela, on the other hand, gives her life to the party and to work with the factory workers of Bombay.

That Long Silence: As the title suggests is a novel is about the silence of a woman in which she is suffering and searching for her individual identity. *That Long Silence* (1989) is an expression of the modern Indian housewife and depicts the inner conflicts of the protagonist and her quest for identity. The silence between the protagonist and her husband further deteriorates the situation. Towards the end of the novel, she realizes that she should break the silence and try to achieve her identity as an individual through self-realization and self-assertion. Her husband cannot understand her feelings as a result of which she decides to move on. This whole story revolves around Jaya's quest for identity.

In the novel, she has to face gender discrimination and she was nurtured with the idea that male is everything and woman is nothing. As her mother says, "Husband was like a sheltering tree, without the tree you're dangerously unprotected and vulnerable" (32). In this way, she negotiates her past experience and analyses her individuality. She was christened as Jaya which means victory and her name has been changed as Suhasini which means submission. As she says, "His dispassionate tone, his detached touch, had somehow angered me; actually, my name isn't Jaya at all. Not now, I mean, it's Suhasini, Where did it come from? Marriage. It is the name Mohan gave me when we got married?"(15). Later, she rejects this name and protests against the male-dominated society. Shashi Deshpande presents the most crucial issue in this novel, that is, marital sex. As she speaks her feeling to her husband "In fact had never spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was erased each time after it happened; it never existed in the word" (95). These social taboos associated with marriage which make her woman. Jaya comes out with this situation and suffering between her self-respect and her body.

The novels of Shashi Deshpande present women in the changing times. Her novels are a reflection of the real-life struggles of middle-class women. By

presenting women protagonists as progressive and assertive, she beautifully exposes the patriarchal domination and the socio-cultural mindset. Shashi Deshpande's novels reflect their high critical mind of women's identity seem to reveal the essential and typical theme of feminist literature. It shows that how the feminist mystique deceives woman and that the persona, a wise mother and a good wife is no more woman's desirable identity. There are repeated instances in her works to ascertain that the problems of women result from the long process of socio-cultural conditioning, personal experiences and impressions in man-woman relationships. As she said in her interview:

Human relationship is what a writer is involved with. Person to person to social relationship. These are the two primary concerns of a creative writer and, to me, the former is of immense importance. My preoccupation is with the interpersonal relationship and Human emotions. (qtd. in *Man-woman relationships in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande*56)

A continuous negotiation between the socio-cultural norms and individual urges which firmly establish her novels as a discourse of muted women's culture can be noticed in her works. Marriage, in fact, becomes only another enclosure for women that restrict the movement towards autonomy and self-realisation. It fails to provide them with love and freedom and therefore, the protagonists resort to extra-marital relations.

The second author of this research work is Mridula Garg. She was born on October 25, 1938, in Kolkata and earned her Bachelor's degree from Miranda House in Delhi University and Masters from the Delhi School of Economics. Mridula Garg is a noted Indian writer of Hindi and English languages. Her works include six novels, eight short stories and two volumes of essays. Her novels are *Usske hisse ki Dhoop* (1975), *Chitacobra*, *Anitya*, (1979) *Mai aur Mai* (1984) *Kath Gulab*, (1996) *Miljul Man*. Her works include novels, short stories, plays has published 20 books in Hindi till now.

Usske Hisse Ki Dhoop: This novel was published in Hindi in 1978 and translated into English by Manisha Chaudhary with the title, *A Touch of Sun*. In this novel the protagonist Manisha evolves a role for herself which is more than an aggregate of her various domestic roles contending that true identity can be obtained outside

the exteriority and vast image of life, in the place of the traditional image of one whose identity is defined not in her own terms but in terms of man. This shows the woman's quest for the sunlight of her share as the title suggests. The present research would go through the circumstances and conditions and analyse the protagonist's path of purpose and fulfillment against marriage from feministic perspective.

Chittacobra: *Chittacobra* was first published in Hindi in 1999 and translated into English by Manisha Chaudhary. The novel *Chittacobra* shows that a protagonist Manu does dare to indulge in reflection during sexual intercourse. There is an admixture of sensual and analytical opposed. That is particularly a woman's thinking for herself. There is another issue that is marriage disharmony that's why the protagonist finds a way to feel free with another person. The present study will analyse the clash between body and mind. This combines the independent woman's attitude that explores deep into her psyche and elaborates her needs without compromising and searches for that solution. She declares herself free from that bondage which had previously rioted over her entity.

Kathgulab: This novel was published in Hindi in 2003 and translated by Manisha Chaudhary with title *Country of Goodbyes*. There are four stories in the novel *Kathgulab*. Through the stories of four women and one man, the five-voice novel *Kathgulab* displays all the stereotypes of the male oppression of woman Smita, who has been sordidly raped by her brother in law and runs away from the family home and her beloved "wood rose". She ends up in America where she describes herself as sad and lonely and the trees as her only friends. All women in this novel try to find their true self.

In her short stories collection *Harri Bindi* there are eighteen famous short stories compiled. Harri Bindi is one of the famous short stories. In this collection, Harri Bindi has been inspiring all the women to explore their desires and anxieties. Her next novel *Mai Aur Mai* she creates two fictional characters named Kaushal and Madhavi. Khaushal is very orthodox kind of a man. He has overconfident that what he does in his life and with other people is legal for him no matter what. Madavi realised this thing that everything goes wrong and she blamed herself for all the wrong things. After coming in the influence of Kaushal he realised that

everything is good for him and misuse of relations are too. Kaushal has become her inspiration and enemy too just because of the stereotypes culture in our society.

She writes on women issues like the quest for self, male-female confrontation, marriage disharmony, and other issues like the environment, child labour etc. Her writings bring out women's feelings, emotions, and their rational intellect. Her writings have been suppressed by the government as well as male-dominated literary circles. Her novels talk about women and sexuality, extra-marital affairs and the subversion of the sexual power equation when the woman finds sexual intercourse mechanical and even considers rape to be a mere physical accident, refusing to let it mar the rest of her life. She is one of the chief writers to speak against governmental and non-governmental forms of censorship of women's writings and on the creative freedom of women writers. She promotes the women's expression in the narrative structure itself and criticises male oppression on a female.

The present research work addresses various issues regarding the construction of gender how gendered identity in the society and the politics are behind the construction of gender and how society and culture subjugate women. This study analyses the female identity, how it is expressed in literature and the role of language in the formation and expression of female identity completely in a new light. Themes, motifs and techniques, as well as images symbols and linguistic aspects of both the writers are compared in the light of female identity. This study considers the qualitative technique to evaluate women's characterisation as portrayed by Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg in their novels.

Methodology

In order to apply the analytical and descriptive methods to research, the primary sources such as the original works of these writers as well as the secondary sources available in the form of criticism have been used. The present research is about finding various remedies for presenting the identity of women in a patriarchal society. The views of leading critics and other authors writing about the same subject would be taken into consideration and such inputs are utilised in

completing the proposed work. The subject matter is analysed in the perspective of feminist theory. Different interviews of feminist critics and writers, as well as documentaries highlighting the plight of women in a patriarchal society, have also been consulted and introspected in depth. Selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg are: *That Long Silence*, *The Dark Hold No Terror*, *A Matter of Time*. Second selected Author's Novels are: *Chittacobra Country of Goodbyes* and *A Touch of Sun*.

Objectives

1. To explore the emerging trends of feminism such as the assertion of individuality, the quest for identity, frustration and isolation.
2. To analyse various perspectives of suppressed women, their exploitation and the patriarchal structure from the feministic perspective.
3. To examine the problem, pain and suffering of oppressed women from different sections of the society through the selected texts.
4. To critically analyse the identity crisis of women and their struggle for the establishment and reconstruction of their identity through given texts
5. To study the role of education in the empowerment of women in society through given texts.

Significance

This research comprises a comparative study of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg which project modern Indian woman's search for her identity and role in the family and society. Novels of both writers have taken into account various issues such as marginalisation of women, marital disharmony, subjugation, rape, repressed desires, and women as silent victims. This research work is significant because both are important contemporary authors who raise questions about the quest for identity. These novels are concerned with gender-based discrimination, economic and sexual exploitation of women. Women as victims of patriarchy have been the silent sufferers and subjugated, discriminated

for many ages. The present study highlights the condition and circumstances and studies the psyche of middle-class women within their marriages and working places and in their family life. A comparative study of these texts highlights these issues thoroughly and this study also makes the females aware to find their own identity and to bring forth the feeling that they deserve every right of being equal to men.

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Chapter 2

Critiquing female identity in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg

Female identity is a critical concern to formulate the individual entity in the female's autonomy. Females have always been submissive in male-dominated society. They could not get their own identity in the patriarchal ideology. An identity of a woman plays an important role to emancipate her as a product of, her social role, status, individuality and self, in her life. It describes every aspect of life e.g social, economic and political. It relates to self-image, self-esteem, individuality and usually refers to the individuality of the women protagonists who submit themselves under the forced norms of the male-dominated society and their families. Therefore, women consider their self-respect and the other development in their life. The social revolutions not only change the family structure and relationships but also the other social activities. As William Eugene Connolly a political and theorist known for his work on democracy and pluralism, opines:

My identity is what I am and how I am recognised rather than what I chose, want or consent to; it is the dense self from which choosing wanting and consenting proceed. Without the density, these acts could not occur with it, they are recognised to be mine. (164)

Female consciousness has always been a polemical issue to know their existence in society in every aspect. A woman has been subjugated in the male-dominated society. Females have also been discriminated, exploited, and subjugated due to their inequality in every sphere of their life. They have always been asked why they are not getting their own identity which is very intrusive for them. There is a conjuncture in which they are lurking that is tradition and modernity. Indian English fiction has projected its condition for many ages. Patriarchal manifestation has created such ideologies which subjugate their distinctiveness. They could not get their own identity in the patriarchal dominance in the passing years. Woodward explains the identity formation which is describing them by their conscious. As he says:

Give us an idea of who we are and how we relate to others and to the world in which we live. Identity marks the way in which we are the same as others who share the same as others who share that

position and the way in which we are different from those who do not.(Woodward 1-2)

In male-dominated society, females are struggling to get their equality in order to establish their individuality. According to Judith Butler's words in the book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* she opines:

For that masculine subject of desire, trouble became a scandal with the sudden intrusion, the anticipated agency, of a female object that inexplicably returns the glance, reverses the gaze, and contests the place and authority of the masculine position. The radical dependency of the masculine subject on the female other suddenly exposes his autonomy as illusory.(Butler 46)

It is a description of an independent middle-class woman who is facing the problem in the fusion of tradition and modernity. Despite the equal opportunities for education and economic independence, women remained a victim of domestic violence in the family and other legal rights outside. Women are performing their equivalence with the man as physically, mentally and socially, despite this fact they denied to express their feelings, thoughts and grief. There is a conscious change in the sphere of roles and values that play an important part to develop the female identity. As Cheri Register encapsulates that:

the art or more specifically, literary works, are responsible for providing role models for this identity and that by portraying women whose identities are not dependent on men they are able to create new languages, definitions and symbolic orders. (Register 236)

Albeit, Cheri Register suggesting that women should not be depended on men they have their own capabilities and literature in which they can choose their way to express their feelings and emancipate their thoughts. Women feel inferior in the male chauvinism ideology which drags them from their individuality. Mridula Garg relates her protagonist's views in her novel *A Touch of Sun*. In her novel, she was disturbed in the company of Jiten and Madhukar as she was not physically abused and discriminated and exploited still she is not gratified with them. Because she was confused and not getting her own identity. In this context, she

makes her interest in other things to gain her identity. Therefore, Erik Erikson describes an identity that how we look oneself intensively. How we compare ourselves with others which make unconscious about our identity. He says:

...a subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image. As a quality of unself-conscious living, this can be gloriously obvious in a young person who has found himself as he has found his commonality. In him we see emerge a unique unification of what is irreversibly given--that is, body type and temperament, giftedness and vulnerability, infantile models and acquired ideals--with the open choices provided in available roles, occupational possibilities, values offered, mentors met, friendships made, and first sexual encounters. (Erikson176)

In Indian English fiction woman has been depicting in different situations to elucidate their identity. Indian novelists like Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shoba De, and Kiran Desai have described women in their prominent works. They have uplifted them by giving their opinion in the English literature. Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg have also done a lot for the emancipation of women in the male-dominated society. Shashi Deshpande is a well-known feminist writer in the contemporary era in Indian English fiction. She was born at Dharwad, Karnataka in 1938. She completed her education in Dharwad. She got her M.A degree in English from the University of Mysore in 1970. She got a degree in law as well as in journalism also. Then she joined onlooker as a journalist. She has been honored with different prestigious awards for her contribution to Indian literature. While working for the magazine, she started writing and her first short story was published in 1970. Her first novels *The Dark Holds No Terror* was published in 1980. Her novel *That Long Silence* fetched her lot of appreciation. She also received the Sahitya Akademi Award for these novels. Siddharth Sharma describes Shashi Deshpande's vision towards female identity and says:

She is neither the typical western liberated woman nor an orthodox Indian one. Shashi Deshpande does not let herself get overwhelmed by the western feminism or its militant

concept of emancipation in the quest for the wholeness of identity; she does not advocate separation from the spouse but a tactful assertion of one's identity within marriage. (37)

Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg are the most accomplished novelists. They portray middle-class women who are struggling to establish their self in society. They successfully present these women as they are engaged in the complex and difficult social and psychological problem of defining an authentic self. In their novels they present the situation of a woman who is suffering between tradition and modernity, most of the Indian novels that deal with the woman issues give often a peripheral treatment of the subject or end up glorifying the stereotypical virtue of Indian woman. G.S. Amar rightly remarks about Shashi Deshpande's concern that:

Women's struggle in the context of contemporary Indian, to find and preserve her identity as wife, Mother and most important of all as a human being is Shashi Deshpande's major concern as a creative writer and this appears in all her important stories.(10)

Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg explore man's unquestionable superiority and the myth of woman being a martyr and paragon of all virtues. Mridula Garg was born on 25 October in 1938 in the very rich family in Kolkata. She has completed her study in Delhi. Mridula Garg is one of the prominent writers in the contemporary era. In her childhood, she was excessively interested in English and Hindi Languages. From her childhood, she has remained in isolation and reading literature. She kept in her mind the writings of the prominent writes and this made her adopt the writing of great writers. When she was reading the story "Through the working glass" She realised that you could not have.... If u don't want it (67).Being an isolated and ill her friend's squad was very less. Her father supported her in every way. He didn't do any kind of discrimination between male and female. He broke the myth that girls should remain within the four walls of the house. In the field of literature, she was immensely inspired by her father.

In her writings, she discloses the fact that one should never tolerate injustice in any field. She has always been aggressive in order to maintain equality

between male and female. As Simon de Beauvoir describes that a man also longs for a woman but she will never be more than an element in his life,"she does not sum up his destiny. But the girl, since childhood and whether she intends to stay within or go beyond the bounds of femininity, has looked to the male for fulfillment and escape"(Beauvoir 328).

She projects this aggression in her novels. She has struggled very hard to establish herself as a writer in the Hindi literature. She has to face many difficulties in her life. For facing these difficulties her family and her environment have been very much disturbing. It is an insult for a writer to insult her work of art because their writings are the reflection of their personality. There are many themes in their novels which drag the female identity and on the other hand, there are some themes which are asserting their identity. In the context of Mridula Garg's thinking about women empowerment Elaine Showalter describes and she said that let the men feel how painful be the condition of women to being submissive in the male-dominated society. She says:

the wounding of male heroes is a symbolic way of making them experience the passivity, dependency and powerlessness of women. If he is to be redeemed and to rediscover his humanity, the woman's man must find out how it feels to be a woman".(Showalter152)

Therefore, a man should know the feelings, desires and conscious of a female for making their relationship sound. So, the dominance of man represses the desires of a female. In the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg female protagonists are suffering in their different conditions in which they desire their respective entity. In Indian society, women are suffering because of the tradition, culture, and male-dominated society which set their roles to be performed. These novels exhibit these issues which are demeaning their self and identity. In this chapter, the research work explores the major elements which are demeaning the female identity and these elements have become an obstacle in the emancipation of women. Therefore both the writers have penned down the major issues in their works which explores the inferiority complex of women. These disparities demean them to move on in society.

Gender Subjugation

Gender subjugation plays a major role in demeaning the female identity which resists the females to emancipate their individuality in the patriarchal milieu. In the cultural norms, gross gender subjugation has become the prime issue. Therefore, men are enjoying their privilege because of their masculinity. Chris Weedon in her book *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*

Men, by virtue of their penis, can aspire to the position of power and control within the symbolic order. Women, on the other hand, have no position in the symbolic order, except in relation to men, as mothers, and even the process of mothering is given patriarchal meanings, reduced, in Freud, to an effect of penis envy. (Weedon 53)

In society, masculinity relates to the power which has been enjoyed by the man. Therefore, Chris describes the male dominance that men take advantage of women on the basis of their biological differences. A woman has always recognised in relation to man in society. These differences make her inferior and this also shows the male chauvinism in the society. In this context Sigmund Freud he says that for women “anatomy is destiny and normal human was male, the female was a deviant human being, lacking a penis and her entire psychology supposedly centered around the struggle to compensate for this deficiency”(12). Chris Weedon and Sigmund Freud describe the masculinity and femininity differently in the same context.

Thus, hierarchy uses this biological difference to oppress women in the male-dominated scenario. Schacht and Ewing argue that in masculinities studies “By almost exclusively focusing on men and their problems, women are, like in larger patriarchal realities, marginalized and ignored”(161). Helen Cixous the idea of Jacques Derrida in book the book *The Feminist Reader Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism* where she combines the logocentrism and phallogocentrism which oppress women in phallogocentrism Ideology:

To proclaim woman as the source of life, power and energy and to hail the advent of a new feminine language which ceaselessly

subverts these patriarchal binary schemes where logocentrism colludes with phallogocentrism in an effort to oppress and silence women. (125)

Helen Cixous explains that in order to combine the two terms Logocentrism and phallogocentrism as Phallogocentrism. Phallogocentrism is coined by Jacques Derrida which means the masculine power to dominant oppress. Thus, Logocentrism has described the gender in the patriarchal milieu. It is also a philosophical term describes the language which decides the linguistic differences between man and woman. In this way, Derrida combines these two terms which become the term phallogocentrism. In both the ways a woman is suppressed in the male-dominated society in which a man uses her masculine powers to oppress a woman.

In the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg, the protagonists in the novels are repressed, discriminated, exploited, raped, isolated, dominated, and abused. Protagonists of Shashi Deshpande have different stories which have been analysed in this chapter. Saru in the *The Dark Holds No Terror* is a reflective novel of the feminist aspirations which reflects gender discrimination. The novel focuses on a woman's awareness of her predicament, her wanting to be recognised as a person than as a woman. And her inferior complex leads her in the whole her life. Her unconscious makes her highly frustrated to take her decisions. Saru is an educated economically independent middle-class house wife. She is conscious of her gender as a child and whose loveless marriage with her husband leads to her agonising search for herself. Her relationship with her husband becomes unbearably strained and she returns for some solace. In her parent's house, she faces gender discrimination. Her mother loves her brother and hates her. She blames her that you killed him. Why didn't you die? Why are you alive, when he is dead?"(10). This plight not only Saru but millions who are born as girls. They are suffering gender discrimination which represses their emancipation in the society.

Though, the Indian society has male ideologies which enhance the male chauvinism. S.P Swain describes the Saru's image in her journey he says: "Saru journey is a journey from alienation to self- identification from negation to assertion from difference to confidence she learns to trust from feminine self" (39). As she

says: And each time it happens and I don't speak, I put another brick on the wall of silence between us" (88). She has been down that road in which she suffers a lot that makes her silent sufferer. Therefore she says that she does not speak a word she bears all the things silently. So, a woman in the Indian society she chooses being silent sufferer than to speak out for her rights. This silence makes them inferior and leads them to mental trauma.

In the novel, she wanted to join the medical college but her mother doesn't allow her to go. And her father says that "Let her go for B.Sc you can get her married in two years and our response will be over" (130-31). Sometimes, families have become more rigid for their daughters they consider them as a burden upon them and they want to get rid of them by getting them married. These prejudices are linked with the Indian society which subjugates women. The fault lies with their gender, not with them. The gender subjugation is constructed in the male-dominated society. As Simon de Beauvoir describes, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature which is described as feminine" (327).

Gender equality refers to imparting equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to women and men. It refers to the social identity of men and women. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relations between men and women where a woman is inferior and subordinate to man. Feudalism is also responsible for the cultural effects in society. Saru's mother discriminates her from her brother as well as her colour complexion. In Indian society, women have an extensive inferiority complex for her colour and their biological structure as if they get married or not. These taboos are demeaning their strength. Butler describes in her *Gender Trouble* "Gender has to do not with how females really are, but with the way that a given culture or subculture seems them how they are culturally constructed" (98). Gender discrimination is not in human nature it is constructed by the culture, norms, and patriarchy. Female is not as weaker as society makes them. By seeing gender differences Saru argues with her mother that "if you are a woman, I don't want to be one."(4). This statement also shows the gender difference which makes Saru think about her individual identity. She is unable to identify herself as a beloved daughter to her mother and when she grows up she is unable to be attractive enough to be beautiful.

Her mother's adoption of her son at her daughter's cost is the rallying point for the novelist to bring her feminist ideas tighter. The preference for boys over girls can be openly witnessed in Indian homes and is inextricably linked to the Indian psyche. Sons bring dowry could be one reason but Indian society steeped in tradition and superstition considers the birth of a son as auspicious as he carries on the family lineage. As Sarabjit Sandu in his book *The image of Woman in the novels of Sashi Deshpande* aptly remarks:

The mother is very attached to her son. Her attitude is a typical one- after all, he is a male child and therefore one who propagate the family lineage. In another sense also, the male child is considered more important than a girl, because he is qualified to give "Agni" to his dead parents. The soul of the person would otherwise wander in ferment. (19-20)

Gender discrimination is a social construction. Society creates all the norms tradition for the people. Men are not fully responsible for the demining of women's self but the feudal system also responsible for women's subjugation. As Shashi Deshpande, herself describes her point of view that she is not against the men, her fight with the social norms and with the traditions which are imposed on women. In the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya was also asked about gender discrimination and it was very intrusive for Jaya. In the novel As Narayana says to Jaya:

Why give birth to a girl, behnji ;Who'll only suffer because of men all her life? Look at me! My mother loved me very much, she wanted so much for me A house with electricity and water, Shining brass vessels, a silver waist chain, silver anklets... and what have I got? No, no, behnji, better to have a son. (28)

In this context, Beauvoir says that "She is defined and differentiated with references to her. She is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is absolute, she is the other" (307). In the case of gender, discrimination men are very much possessive about their powers. In Indian society, male dominance has been a prominent issue for demeaning the powers of

women in every way. Shashi Deshpande has projected these issues which have become an obstacle in women's liberation.

An assertion of identity:

Female identity arises through female consciousness. To know female identity the consciousness fervently wants to know what a woman is. There are prescribed roles, culture and traditions which construct the female identity and gender identity. These norms and roles can be deconstructed when women will be conscious of their identity. As Judith Butler says in her *Bodies That Matter*, she argues that "whenever construction is considered not as an activity, but as an act, one which happens once and whose effects are firmly fixed; the constructivism is reduced to determinism and implies the evacuation or displacement of human agency". (Butler 9)

As Shashi Deshpande in her writing explores the women's individuality which gives them a way to proceed in her struggle to find their identity. As she describes the female consciousness in her novel *That Long Silence* which is about the silence of a woman in which she suffers and searching for her individual identity. *That Long Silence* her second novel is an expression of the modern Indian housewife and depicts the inner conflicts of the protagonist and her quest for identity. She describes her situation she talks with her consciousness that where she is playing dissident roles and says: "The real picture, the real you never emerge. Looking for, it is bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different faces" (1). The silence between the protagonist and her husband further deteriorates the situation. In the novel the protagonist, Jaya is seeking for her individual identity and asks herself "Who I am" (24).

Rene Descartes a French Philosopher says in his Book *The Early Modern Subject: Self Consciousness and Personal Identity From Descartes to Hume* "I think, therefore I am, was so certain and so evident that all the early modern era and enlightenment most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics were not capable of shaking it, I judged that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking" (Descartes 53–54). Therefore, Jaya describes her family life that how she has to take care of everything as her husband, children

and all other things. Therefore she says: "But what was that myself? Trying to find oneself – what a cliché that has come. As if a thing is possible. As if there is such a thing as oneself, intact and whole, waiting to be discovered." (69). Towards the end of this novel, she realizes that she should break the silence and try to achieve her identity as an individual through self-realization and self-assertion. Her husband cannot understand her feelings as a result of which she decides to move on. This whole story revolves around Jaya's quest for identity.

In the novel, *The Dark Holds No Terror*, Saru the protagonist she has to face gender discrimination. She was nurtured with the idea that male is everything and woman is nothing. In this novel, Saru comes out with the thought that her emancipation is the prominent thing which can save her. Saru recalls her conversation with her father:

Are you sure you want to do it?

Have you thought it over?" „Yes, Baba". „

You can't change your mind later.

This is't something taking singing lessons".

I flushed. Why remind me of that? „

I am eighteen now. Not a child". It isn't easy.

You'll have to work enormously hard. (143)

Saru describes her state of mind at the age of eighteen that how she is asserting her identity in the rigid family. Thereby, Premila Paul in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, A women's Search for Refuge, Indian Women Novelists views, describes, "Saru is highly self-willed and her problems ensue because of her outsized ego and an innate love for power over others" (61). So, Premila Paul also describes Saru's emancipation in male domination which has become the main issue for female exploitation. Marriage is also a major obstacle in the emancipate women's individuality in Indian society. Marriage comes with a lot of responsibilities and norms and tradition. Therefore, a woman has to fulfill all the tradition and customs of their families on behalf of their own interests. Similarly, in the novel, *A Touch of Sun* Manisha says that:

This married life is very strange thing ... what you do....do together! sit together, speak together, though you have something or not....hanging around together....to make friends together, it does not matter if your partner's friend you don't like, eat together and sleep together and it doesn't matter if your partner's snores keep awaking you whole night.
(18)

Marriage is also a major obstacle to emancipate women's individuality in Indian society. Marriage comes with a lot of responsibilities and norms and tradition. Therefore, a woman has to fulfill all the tradition and customs of their families on behalf of their own interests. Similarly, in the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya describes the psychology of the parents in the society that how they prepare their daughters for marriage. Parents impose their desires on their daughters which they have to follow as she says their desires become the hard facts. As she says:

As we grew into young women, we realized it was not loved, but a marriage that was the destiny waiting for us. and so, with a young man, there was the excitement of thinking will this man be my husband?It had been our parents who had taken vague desires of ours and translated them into hard facts. It was like the game we had played as children on our buttons tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor (19)

Maria Mies says in her book *Woman and Patriarchy*:

The non-conforming conduct of the women is the consequences of an external necessity but the changed consciousness. They are not satisfied with the rhetoric of equality between men and women but want to see that the right to an individual and life and the right to development of their individual capabilities are realised in their own lives. (Mies 32)

Maria Mies opines that woman's consciousness develops into the individuality. She wants her individual space in her own capabilities. She does not

want to see herself with the comparison of the man she wants her own horizon in which she can liberate herself. In the novel, *A Touch of Sun* Manisha says, that "Only in that rare moment, do I try to find the meaning of life within myself. Only then am I completely independent of others. I am alone but not afraid of my loneliness. It makes everything outside me extraneous, out of focus "(130). In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* she describes her physical need towards her husband in which she is lacking she says:

I became in an instant, physical aroused woman, with an infinite capacity for loving and giving, with a passionate desire to be absorbed by the man I loved. All the clichés, I discovered were true, kisses were soft and unbearably sweet, embraces hard and passionate, hands caressing and tender, and loving as well as being loved, was, an intense joy. It was as if little nerve ends of pleasure had sprung up all over my body....I was insatiable, not for sex, but for love. Of my being loved. Of my being wanted. If I ever have any doubts, I had only to turn to him and ask him to prove his love for me. And he would....again and again, and again. (40)

One another theme is there in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg which is an art of writing. The protagonists use their pen to save their selves in the patriarchal society. Cora Kaplan opines her view and says:

To be a woman and a poet presents many women poets with such a profound split between their social, sexual identity and their articles practice that the split becomes the insistent subject, something overt, often hidden or displaced of much woman's poetry.(34)

Thereby, in the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya is questing for her identity because Mohan's mother and her sister Vimla also was the victim of gross gender inequality. In the novel, she asserts her identity and she says: "The panic has gone, I am 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" (191). Jaya has been suffering in her married life and she has tolerated enough throughout her life. Females suffer in her life because of their parent's, husband and family. At the end Jaya realises her worth and she decides to establish her

individual identity by breaking all the shackles of the patriarchal society. As Kate Millet in her book *Sexual Politics* says that:

It is by writing, from and toward women, and by taking up the challenge of speech which has been governed by the phallus, that women will confirm women in a place other than that which is reserved in and by the symbolic, that is, in a place other than silence. Women should break out of the snare of silence. They shouldn't be coned into accepting a domain which is the margin or the harem. (Cixous 881)

In the Introduction of *The Second Sex*, she motivates women for their knowledge to establish their existence. In her book, she writes that a woman should write about her experience in the male-dominated society. Therefore she says, "We know the feminine world, more intimately than do the men; because we have our roots in it, we grasp more immediately than do men what it means to a human being to be feminine and we are more concerned with such knowledge" (26). In this context Helen Cixous says:

A woman must write herself, must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. A woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history by her own movement (245).

So, a woman should have her own creative writing for their own movement to empower ourselves. In this context, *Binding Vine* contains a poem by Venu, a poet who questions a woman's urge for creativity: "Why do you need to write poetry? It is enough for a young woman like you to give birth to children. That is your poetry. Leave the other poetry to us men" (69). In the male-dominated society, men think that only, they can do everything and women cannot do what man can do. The male chauvinism is the main aspect which demeans the female identity. In this way, Helen Cixous says that a woman should analyse herself with the texts. In the novel, *Country of Good-Byes* Aseema saying to Smita that: I continued to study home science in spite of being homeless. Aseema says in this context that: You are a fool Look at me, 'have spent my first four salaries learning

karate. You don't need home science to survive in this man's world, you need karate. Aseema makes Smita strong in the male-dominated society because women can't survive unless she is capable of owning her own. In the novels of Mridula Garg, the protagonists are progressive in their way. Shashi Deshpande in *That Long Silence* describes to Nilima that how we can assert their identity. A woman is not a child producing Machine she can have a baby whenever she wants. A man cannot force her if she acknowledges her powers. In this way Jaya explains her situation to Nilima she says:

I could have told her about my excitement when I had stated pills and taken in its possibilities. I'm a free woman now, I had thought, I've assumed control over my own body, over its clumsy, cumbersome process. Now I will conceive only when I want to, I can even stop menstruating if I want. It was my girlhood dream come true.(63-64)

When Jaya realised her identity she describes her situation because she did not like the environment of Mohan's house, where she has to follow orders. She had been repressed her desires for a very long time. As her husband says: "My mother never raised her voice against my father, however badly he behaved to her, he had said to me once" (83). In this situation feudalism, culture, and norms which have been set in the patriarchal society. Men are trained to perform all these roles as they think that these things have existed from ancient times in our families. They do the same things in their families as their forefathers have done before. After that, she says that I have learnt so many things and learned to control my anger and to obey the orders silently. When she realised her identity and her existence and she said out of anger that:

I could and couldn't do womanly and unwomanly. It was when I visited his home that I had discovered how sharply defined a woman's role as they had been a revelation to me, the women in his family, so define about their roles, so well trained in their duties, so skilful in the right areas, so indifferent to everything else. I had never seen so clear, so precise a pattern before, and I had been entranced by it. (82)

Mridula Garg projects Smita a very strong person in the novel *Country of Goodbyes*. She has been discriminated from her childhood days. She loves the wood rose which was her childhood memory which is haunting in her mind throughout her life. Her brother in law rapes her and exploits her very badly. She had to beg her brother in law for her fee that was her biggest helplessness. After that, she went to America where a psychiatrist Jim Jarvis exploits her mentally physically and economically. She has to abort her child because of him. Therefore, she says 'another rape'. Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg are prominent novelists in the contemporary era. In their novels, they describe the female is not another object with whom man can do anything thing what he wants. They project their protagonists in a very passionate way in which they can achieve their goals. Although they are in Indian society and they have to face male domination, traditional boundaries, social taboos, patriarchal milieu still they are asserting their identity. Patriarchal ideology has been the most contemplative issue in the realms of female perspective which dominate females very profoundly.

Patriarchal Ascendency

Patriarchy is the decisive part of the dominance of women. Feminists as Kate Millet, Julia Kristeva, Virginia Wolf, Anita Desai, Shoba De, Gayatri Spivak, Mahashweta Devi, Kamla Markandya, have described the patriarchal ideology in the society which is the main agency for the subjugation of women. As Kate Millet says in the *sexual politics* that "Through institutions such as the academy, the church and the family each of which justifies and reinforces women's subordination to men" (35). Therefore Judith Butler describes patriarchy :

The Political assumption that there must be a universal basis for feminism, one which must be found in an identity assumed to exist cross-culturally often accompanies the notion that the oppression of women has some singular form discernible in the universal or hegemonic structure of patriarchy or masculine domination. The notion of universal patriarchy has been widely criticized in recent years for its failure to account for the working of gender oppression in the cultural contexts in which it exists. (Butler 7)

As in the novel of Shashi Deshpande *That Long Silence*, the protagonist of the novel describes the patriarchal background which drags Jaya from her freedom. She is confused between what Vanitamami is saying and what she wants in her life. As Vanitamami said, "Husband was like a sheltering tree, without the tree you're dangerously unprotected and vulnerable" (32). As Kate Millet further she says that: Subordination argues that women are a dependent sex class under patriarchal domination. (35). In this context, Simone de Beauvoir describes the patriarchy which dominates women and she says:

Man can think of himself without a woman. She cannot think of herself without a man. And she is simply what man decrees. She appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him, she is sex absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not with reference to man not he with the reference to her, she is the incident, the inessential as opposed to the essential. (54)

Therefore, Kate Millet, Simone de Beauvoir describes about patriarchy that man is essential and woman is inessential in the patriarchal world. In married life, a man treats her wife as merely a sex object anything due to patriarchal ideological which has been set out by our forefathers. In the Indian families and in the ancient times it has said that a woman can't live without a man but this theory has been changed now. In the postmodern world, a woman is very progressive in her way she has the power to overcome patriarchal values with her new perspective. In her novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* Saru in her childhood days she was told that she must be obedient and unquestioning.

As a girl, they had told me, must be meek and submissive, why? I had asked. Because you are a female. You must accept everything, even defeat, with grace because you are a girl, they had said. It is the only way, they said, for a female to live and survive". (158)

This shows the patriarchal dominance and social structure of the society which constructs these taboos. In this context, Zillah Eisenstein in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism* argues that "male supremacy and capitalism are the core relations which determine oppression of women. She

defines patriarchy as a “sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege”. (Eisenstein17)

In the patriarchal society, a woman is taught to be shy and submissive because of her well-being. In the novel, Saru realises women’s critical life in society. She wants her own identity to survive. Simone de Beauvoir describes the females who are bounded in the four walls of the home and taught to be traditional, cultural and remain in the patriarchal ideology. Therefore they keep busy to do the works which are not necessary but keep them busy and they can’t think about their selves. In this context, Simon de Beauvoir says:

Few tasks are more like the torture of Sisyphus than housework, with its endless repetition; the clean becomes soiled, the soiled is made clean, over and over, day after day. The housewife wears herself out marking time. She makes nothing perpetuates the present. (470)

As she describes her life between her house and says,“ Waiting for Mohan to come home, waiting for the children to be born, for them to start school, waiting for them to come home, waiting for milk, waiting for the servant, waiting for the lunch carrier man”(30). She herself realise her condition within her house. She has given up in the patriarchal society. She tries to escape from the traditional way of her life with her husband. As Walby describes that“In this system women’s labour power, women’s reproduction, women’s sexuality, women’s mobility and property and other economic resources – are under patriarchal control” (Walby 20).

The patriarchal ideology imposes male dominance on women which subjugate their identity. Jaya wants to enhance the idea of the liberation of a woman in every way. She engulfs herself by a sense of seclusion and Silence. In the same context Jaya the protagonist in the novel *That Long Silence*, she wants to raise her voice against her violation in which she is going through but she cannot because of the male-dominated society and she says: “Oh God, why couldn’t I speak? Why couldn’t I say something? I could say something “(120). She wants to establish her existence in her family because she is an educated and carrier oriented woman but she couldn’t speak due to her male domination in her family. She remains silent even in the domestic issues as she subjugates her

silence and says, “I racked my brain trying to think an answer” (31). In the male-dominated society and in the feudal system, cultural tradition and the social taboos force the woman to remain silent in the society. In this context, Francois Jean Lyotard says:

What is a crime is to impose that silence on another, who is then excluded from the interlocution community? Moreover, an even greater wrong is added to this injustice, since the one who is banished, being prohibited from speaking, has no means to appeal his or her banishment whether political, social or cultural, the exercise of terror is as follows to deprive the other of the ability to that deprivation.(185)

Ever since her marriage she has done nothing but waits. She describes her wait in her married life and says: “Waiting for Mohan to come home, waiting for the children to be born, for them to start school, waiting for them to come home, waiting for milk, waiting for the servant, waiting for the lunch carrier man” (30). In this way, she describes her married life in relation to the social structure in the Indian society. In her description, a woman has to sacrifice all her desire to please her husband father and society. In the novel *Country of Goodbyes* Mridula Garg explores the patriarchal aspects to show the feminine world in the society as Aseema’s brother in law describes her sister in law as he exhibits her and he says:

This is my sister in law, Smita. What a cheez, yar She stays here.... And I’ am always drooling ... (In a stage whisper) Sali Adhi gharwali(half wife)...ha- ha –ha... but my wife has an eagle eye. I dare not let my eyes wander, hey Smita?”. (8)

In the male-dominated society, culture has played a major role to subjugate a woman. In the society, culture has made traditions and myths for relations as Sali Adhi Ghar wali (Half wife) which creates extensive thoughts for men. Therefore, they apply it which takes a different shape to destroy their relationship. As Brislin demonstrates in her book *Understanding Culture’s influence on Behaviour* that the fact of culture that how it takes place in the society and he says:

Culture is transmitted from one generation to the next by parents, teachers, religious leaders, and other respected members of the culture. In technological societies, the mass media also convey cultural messages. This process of transmitting culture across generations is known as socialization. Because cultural beliefs are widely shared and can be taken for granted, they are seldom discussed by adults. (Brislin 93)

As the patriarchal and cultural norms are set in the society again he says to Smita that: "As it is she has a pair of thick glasses. Nobody is going to touch her ...ha...ha-ha...except me." He considers her as she is his authority to say and to do anything with her because he has that kind of relationship with her which is given by culture. As in the short story of Mridula Garg *Rang Dang*, she says that: "In Indian society, marriage is a cure for all diseases....and to have the desire to be alone is to give ineluctable for all her diseases". (28). Sushila Singh remarks in her book *Preface to Feminism Theory, Criticism and Analysis*:

The concept of a woman is of central importance in the formation of feminist theory. But as a concept, it is radically problematic because it is crowded with the overdetermination of male supremacy-invoking in every formulation the limit, contrasting other or mediated self-reflection of a culture built on the control of women. Recent theorists resist the universalizing tendency of cultural feminism and highlight the differences between women, and men, in a way that undercuts arguments for the existence of an overarching gendered essence. (2)

Sushila Singh describes the male supremacy in the cultural norms. In every situation and in cultural ceremonies men take all the privilege and women are treated as other. In the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya Describes her grandmother's situation in her family how she herself made her in cultural domination she says:

Ajji, a Shaven Widow, had denuded herself of all those things that make up a woman's life. She had no possessions, absolutely none, apart from two saris she wore. Her room was bare, except for the

large bed on which grandfather had slept, a bed which, ever since I knew it, was unburdened by a mattress. Aiji herself sat on the bare ground and slept on a straw mat at night. (26)

The traditional thinking is very powerful in the families which bind the whole family. These traditional thinking and social taboos are associated with the subjugation of women which cut her off from the society to live in isolation as Jaya describes her Aiji who is a widow. In the ancient time, a widow woman has to live in the isolation and she has to do all the rituals which Jaya has to describe in a statement. This is all about the social rituals which are reasons for demeaning the actual self of a woman. Patriarchy plays a Major role to dominate women in every way. The two writers have described the patriarchal domination in their novels very vibrantly. These novelists have very aggressively denied the domination of male powers over female.

Tradition and Modernity

Another theme that is man-women relationship also a major theme is demeaning the self of Indian middle-class women. They are suffering from the fusion of tradition and modernity. Marriage in Indian society is the most important and engrossing aspect of life. The theme of Man and Woman relationship is an old concept in Indian society. As D. H Lawrence describes Marriage that: "the greatest relationship for humanity will always be the relation between man and woman, parent and child will always be subsidiary (130). D.H Lawrence encapsulates the concept of marriage with the long-lasting relationship between man and woman but nowadays it is not possible in a male-dominated society. In the male-dominated families, the concept of marriage is a union of two different minds. Female's identity has not been openly realised in Indian society. As Uma Banerjee explains: "the hypocrisy of the institution of marriage is increasingly taking the shape of a dead Albatross around the necks of the modern emancipated self- respecting women" (153).

The *Dark holds No Terror* explores the inner struggle of Saru, who represents the middle-class working woman in India. Her marriage to Manu is a means of that love and security which she had always lacked in life. She says that "I was hungry for love; each act of sex was a triumphant assertion of our love of

my being loved, of my being wanted.”(35).Her marriage begins to crumble under the burden of success in her profession. She is happy until she begins to establish herself as a doctor. Now the situation undergoes a change. She says, “he had been the young man and I his bride.Now I was the lady doctor and he was my husband” (37). Likewise, in the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya suffered from isolation. Despite her marriage to Mohan and subsequently becoming a mother of two children, she was lonely. Her husband could not understand her feelings as a result of which she was torn from within. Shashi Deshpande uses beautiful imagery to describe Jaya’s married life:

A pair of bullocks yoked together- a clever phrase but can it substitute for the reality? A man married for seventeen years. A couple with two children. A family somewhat like the one caught and preserved for posterity by the advertising visuals I so loved. But the reality was only this. We were two persons, a man and a woman. (8)

The image of beasts performing the duty mechanically undermines the husband-wife relationship, which is united in marriage for love and not for leading a mechanical life-terminating in mutual hatred and distrust. Jaya describes the role assigned to a wife in our country, who is called upon to stay at home, look after the babies and keep out of the rest of the world. In this context Maria Mies points out:

The carrier woman has not only to face the opposition of her surrounding and to struggle against many objective obstacles, but she is often divided in herself because she also often subscribes to the Indian ideas of womanhood. Her problems arise, first, from the contradictions between this image and the demand for a new social situation and then from the discrepancy between new aspiration and lack of opportunity. (qtd. in Siddarth 43)

Marriage may not often be the best of all possible worlds to a man and a woman, yet in the present dispensation, it is more or less essential and must be made to work, for neither a man nor a woman is complete in himself or herself. In this way, she negotiates her past experience and analyses her individuality. As she was christened as Jaya which means victory and her name has been changed as Suhasini which means submission. As she says, “His dispassionate tone, his

detached touch, had somehow angered me; actually, my name isn't Jaya at all .not now, I mean, it's Suhasini, Where did it come from? Marriage. It is the name Mohan gave me when we got married?"(15). In the traditional way of marriage, a woman has to change their name after their marriage which used to describe their identity that got a new name after marriage. In modern society, a woman can't bear all these traditional values which are demeaning their identity in the name of tradition. In this way, Jaya is suffering between tradition and modernity which is losing her identity. In the novel *That Long Silence* again Jaya describes her relationship with her husband (Mohan) with whom her relationship was just for the sake of marriage. She often feels fear with her husband and she says that " because I had been scared – scared of hurting Mohan, scared of jeopardising the only career I had, my marriage"(144).In this novel, the protagonist is facing mental trauma due to her husband because she is not happy with her husband. She always gets conscious to attach with her husband. Her husband scared her in every situation. Thus, her marriage becomes an obstacle to establish her identity.

A Matter of time describes the protagonist's suffering between Tradition and modernity as he says:" And I knew that it was for this, this losing yourself in another human being that men give their dreams of freedom" (223). As their marriage was a love marriage. In spite of the fact love, both are suffering from their relationship. As Gopal says "Why did I marry Summi? Because I met her as simple as that" (65-67). In the novel *A Matter of Time* the protagonist Summi is a very strong person who is suffering in her family life. Her husband left her and she takes care of her daughters. Although their marriage was love marriage they were not interested in each other. In this novel,Summi and her mother are sailing in the same boat. Her mother and Summi are also searching for their true identity in the male-dominated society. This novel is based on the deserted wives who are suffering in their respective situation.

The Binding Vine reveals the reality of modern Indian women who are still underprivileged of their Human rights and are mistreated in love and marriage. Simon De Beauvoir again gives her view of the marriages and says," She shuts behind the doors of her new home. When she was a girl, the whole country was her homeland, the forests were hers. Now she is confined to a restricted space"

(502). In the context of restricted space Jaya describes her situation in her home she says:

But for me, now that I had abandoned 'Seeta' there was nothing; or, if there was, I had to search for it. Was that the reason why I was sitting here with the diaries of so many years about me? Looking through these diaries, I realised, was like going backward. As I burrowed through the facts, what I found was the woman who had once lived here. Mohan's wife. Rahul's and Rati's mother. Not myself.
(69)

In *That Long Silence*, Jaya deny the concept of being Seeta in her life because it doesn't work in the modern world. In the third world feminism, women are very progressive her lifestyle. In the traditional way, a family wants their daughter in law to be very beautiful and calm and silent. In the postmodern world, a woman can't be quite in the case of their rights. Therefore, she has been struck in the fusion of tradition and modernity. In this way, Jays say that I am just Mohan's wife, Rahul and Rati's mother. She describes her situation because she wants to get rid of the traditional society where she can't express her individual thoughts. As in the novel, *The Dark Holds No Terror* and *That Long Silence* there is the same critical issue in which all the women facing the same problem in the Indian Middle-class families. In this context D.H.J Morgan writes:

While it is true that Marriage, the home and the family form the major areas of a woman's life. It is also true that the role of a woman in modern society is not simply the role of a wife, a mother, a daughter, and the role of a sister and so on. In other words, her identity is not simply a sum of domestic-based identities. (qtd. in Prasad148)

In the male-dominated society, women repress their individual identities for the sake of their father, husband and their children. As she says that, she wonders, "Had she not got bored and in her boredom started looking for signs of collapse in the goal?"(25). These are the characteristics of dissatisfied wife and the most vocal about married life's statement and power pressure. Simone de Beauvoir writes: "The tragedy of marriage is not that it fails to assure woman the promised happiness - there is no such thing as assurance in regard to happiness -

but that it mutilates her; it dooms her to repetition and routine". (Beauvoir 496). In the novel *Country of Goodbyes* two sisters Namita and Smita talk to each other they say:

Both of us have been so unlucky, "Namita said," Ma ruined my life and pita ji ruined yours." What did Ma do? Had Ma not put a stop to my studies I wouldn't be so dependent on him today. At least I could have done my B.A., earned a little something on my own. Now I have so little money that I cannot give you any, even for your fees. (13)

Marriage is a part of tradition and modernity in which a woman has to get married just because of the sake of their parents, relatives and society. They have to quit their study. If they are working their husbands don't allow them to work. If they are working then they have to struggle between tradition and modernity, they have to manage their home and their carrier. In between, they lost their individuality for what they are seeking in the male-dominated society.

There is another issue that is marriage disharmony that's why the protagonist finds a way to feel free with another person. The present study analyses the clash between body and mind. She has not a healthy relationship with her husband and she describes her situation to Pastor Richard and she says: We are one, but not for each other We are apart from each other and then she says," We have slept together in each other's arms and two words are reverberate in our subconscious- Richard----Manu....Manu---Richard (66). These things haunt in her mind in the relationship her husband neglects her feeling. This combines the independent woman's attitude that explores deep into her psyche and elaborates her needs without compromising and searches for that solution. She declares herself free from that bondage which had previously rioted over her entity. Manu too, like Manisha, realises that dedication to a purpose would be the source of her emancipation.

In this way, *A Matter of Time* Sumi's daughter Aru rebels against her father. She approaches Gopal not expecting sympathy for her or for mother. She wants to unravel the strange behaviour of her father. She asks Gopal "Why did you get married at all, why did you have children?" In the novel, Gopal left her wife and her daughters to survive alone in their life. Thus, marriages are also being a

part of disharmony for the females to enhance them to achieve their identity. In these novels, women have a different situation but they are losing their identity in the same way. They are unconventional in their approach towards marriage and relationships, but it is their gradual progression from the personal to the social realm, a kind of consciousness rising of these characters, which makes these novels feminist texts.

Extra-Marital Affair:

In Indian society, marriages are meant to stay long-lasting. In the Indian middle-class milieu, people admire the concepts of marriage. In India, people follow tradition and culture and take a vow on their marriage for staying forever. In the western world also people follow the concept of marriage as well. As in the biblical quotes describes on marriage ceremony in the presence of God. The biblical verse says that: "What therefore God has joined together let not man separate". (Mark 10:9)

Further biblical teachings say that a man and a woman shall live together and God commands the people that if they are married let not man separate them. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31). In this way In India and the western world also both believe in the concept of marriage but the culture, freedom, psyche and relationships made it very different these days. The situation has totally different in the postmodern world. Extra-marital affairs. Live-in relationships, homosexuality, and gay lesbian relation are widely common in the 90th century. Every Human being wants their identity, liberation, individuality and emancipation. In literature, the prominent writes expose the extramarital affairs in society. J Mendonca and Ingrid suggest about the extramarital affair that: "An Extramarital involvement should not be criticised because it quite often will stimulate the marriage and restore some of its lost luster, consider the proportion of adultery" (1). In the novel, *The Dark holds No Terror* she has an extramarital affair with her teacher Boozie. Because she is not happy with her husband and her parents. She got insulted since her childhood and in her married life also. She also deceives herself into believing that there is only a teacher-student or mentor-creator relationship between them. She says:

It was the Pygmalion-Galatea story all over again...How fast I learnt things apart from pediatrics...From him. It was he who taught me to dress with elegance and simplicity, he who taught me to speak good English...how to read and what. (91)

Saru has been suffering throughout her life. She wanted to be pampered by her father, mother and husband as well, but she couldn't get that. Women are very possessive for everything they want. She explains his qualities as in she is getting vibes from him. She says, "He was...dark, rugged, handsome and masterful. everything about him...his language, his accent, his stride, his pipe...contributed to the aura that surrounded him"(88). G. Dominic Savio, describes the extramarital affairs are the emancipation of Shashi Deshpande's protagonists:

They suffer no guilt and they begin to evolve a new code of sexual ethics. They experience a sense of sexual autonomy freeing themselves from sexual politics. Saru's socializing with Boozie, the fairy godfather" is a calculated move in that direction. She has no moral qualms in allowing herself to be the raw materials in the hands of a Pygmalion to be shaped into perfection, a Galatea. (64-65)

In the novel *Roots and Shadows*, Indu describes her affair and her intimacy with Naren and she says:

Naren pulled me down so that I lay on the carpet beside him, his face close to mine..."Why do you deny the fact that you're a woman?"...You can't deny this", he said, his hands tightly teasing on my breasts "...or this"...and I was, yes, responding to him with ardour and warmth when I realised who it was. (87)

Mary Eagleton observes: "Because female desire...is repressed or so misinterpreted in a phallogocentric society, its expression becomes a key location for deconstructing this control."(73). Mary Eagleton says about female desires which are repressed in the patriarchal world. Jasbir Jain describes this third stage in the following terms as:

an effort to re-define power and freedom. It is an attempt to extend the area of women's roles and their relationships in order to drive

home the point that the self does not exist in isolation. The term post-feminism has thus evolved, moving from feminist to womanist to humanist. It is a move towards a reciprocal change. (Jain 83)

In the postmodern world, women are very progressive in their way of thinking. The feminist writers also have taken initiative for the freedom of women. In the male-dominated society female repress their desires for the sake of their family and culture. They can't get what they deserve. Their husbands neglect them and don't fulfil their desires due to feudalism and culture. In Indian society, roles are set from ancient times and they follow them. Jaya is pleasantly surprised and intrigued by the discovery, as she says:

At first, it had seemed strange to have a man talk so freely to me. All the men I'd known till then had put on a different face, a different tone, a false smile when they spoke to me. It was always made clear that we were not on the same level. But this man...it had been a revelation to me that two people, a man and a woman, could talk this way. With this man, I had not been a woman. I had been just myself and Jaya. (152-153)

In the novel *That Long Silence* Jaya suffers between tradition and modernity and she faced many ups and down due to her marital status with her husband. When she meets to Madhukar she gets realised that can also be like that. And again she says, "She lay on her bed and thought, how easy it all is. She loves Madhukar and he loves her. Why should they feel guilty about it? Why keep it a secret? Why cheat?"(45). On the other hand in the novel *Chittacobra* the protagonist is very much progressive for her desires and she does what she wants in her life. Mridula Garg projects their protagonists very bluntly they discuss their sexual life very often in their novel. Mridula Garg describes the Manu sexuality in the novel and Manu has an extramarital affair with a priest Richard. They extensively involve with each other because they are happy with the company of each other. In the novel she said that it's not sinning if we are intentionally involved with each other she says:

"Dou you think, it is a sin? Do you guilty?"

“No”

“Why not”

“Maybe you are a part of God for me....no... you have become a complete God for me! I am incomplete without you”.

“Do you not feel guilty in front of God?”.

“No”

“What is a sin?”.

“It means to sin against you,not God!”

“Yes”!

“You have not committed any sin because I have chosen me with my own will”.

“But society considers it sin?”.

“Society is not a God!”.

As a religious being, Richard was morally confused that he is doing right or wrong. Mridula Garg condemns the societal taboos which are related to the sexuality of human being. If a woman consciously wants her emancipation in her life then how it could be a sin. In Indian society traditional roles and culture demean female identity. Mridula Garg's protagonists are extensively aggressive to know their path. She projects her female characters with the full positive note to achieve her goal. Mridula Garg presents an overview of the Indian middle-class family that how a woman can achieve her goal in the male-dominated society.

Man Woman relationship

In the male-dominated society, females are very much conscious of their individuality and their different roles which are meant to be performed for them. There is another role which is to be in a relationship in the other person. It comes with a lot of formalities rituals and domination. Mridula Garg and Shashi Deshpande immensely project these themes in their novels. As in the novel, *A Matter of time* latest novel of Shashi Deshpande describes the history of the family

which exploring the man-woman relationship in the patriarchal society. This novel undergoes mental torture, loss agony, and suffering of the women at the hands of the husband. First protagonist Kalyani's silence is inexplicable, it is pure injustice. She says imagine not speaking to your own wife for over thirty years and she wants her grandmother to defend herself and further, she says: " It is important that you speak out, state the truth, that you stand up and defend yourself, that you refused to be misjudged"(143). Her character is faithful and she is sacrificing her life like an Indian woman of the old generation. She could not stand up for herself. Sumi the second protagonist thinks that what made Kalyani endure all these predicaments and she says: "She is a wife and not a widow? The fact that she has the right to all the privileges of the wife of a loving husband?"(143). Sumi remembers the old woman's words:

It is enough to have a husband and never mind the fact that he has not spoken to you for decades? Does the wifehood, ' makes up for everything, for the deprivation of a man's love for the feel of his body against yours, the warmth of his breath on your face', the touch of lips on yours'? Kalyani lost all this, but the Kumkum is intact and she can move in the company of women with the pride of a wife. (167)

The portrayal of these characters is influenced by the ideas of the second wave feminism which aimed at creating awareness among women about the subtle social conditioning which makes them dependent on men and keeps them satisfied with their subservient status in society. The women characters in *Country of Goodbyes* exhibit the next stage where the four women from different backgrounds are in search of themselves in different contexts. Joan Gallos opines:

Development for men has meant increases autonomy and separation from there as a means of strengthening identity, empowering the self, starting identity a satisfactory life coursefor women, attachments and relationship play a central role in both identity formation and concepts of development maturity ...colouring how women are themselves, their ongoing responsibilities to those around them".(Gallos 54)

An analysis of the events of their lives and experiences reveals the various dimensions of the subjugation of women in society and their struggles for self-empowerment. As the novel appeared at the end of the twentieth century, the impact of the emergence of post-feminism and the third wave feminism on it is also studied and described. In the novel, *A Matter of Time* Aru Sumi's daughter was very disturbed by the married life of her mother. In her life, she lost her faith and she doesn't want to get married and she denies the fact a man and a woman can stay together in her whole life. Therefore she says her mother that: "I'm never going to get married" (76). And then she talks about her grandmother who is suffering in her married life and she says: "To see her grandmother fills her with indignation, a sense of pity at the enormous waste. If this is all life can offer you, She says I can't go on" (184). *A Matter of Time* describes protagonist Kalyani's worst condition and she suffers between married life and widowhood because her husband left her and she has to pretend as she is a married woman she says:

It is enough to have a husband and never mind the fact that he has not spoken to you for decades? Does this wifeness makes up for everything, for the deprivation of a man 'love for the feel of his body against yours, the warmth of his breath on your face, the touch of lips on yours'? Kalyani lost all this, but her Kumkum is intact and she can move in the company of women with the pride of a wife. (167)

Kalyani, Sumi's mother is pretending that is very happy with her husband. She is tolerating the burden of kumkum on her shoulder which is making her weekday day by day. Aru describes her situation in the novel *A Matter Time* she denies the married relationship similarly Smita is also worried about the thought of marriage and she says:

I was really amused. These people fall in love so easily and divorce each other equally; practically every child has more step-parent or foster parents; they take such pride in being a free society, pleasure in sex without any strings attached, but they still believe that sexual relations between parents can have a long-term effect on the child. An entire psychiatric industry worth many thousands of dollars rested on the investigation, expression and treatment of these effects. (31)

In the same context in the novel *That Long Silence* Saru is also frustrated in her married life due to her relationship with her husband and she says, "I want to give up working". . . . I want to stop working. I want to give it all up . . . my practice, the hospital, everything" (79). As a typical husband who has enjoyed the luxuries that have been provided by his wife Saru through her profession, she immediately rejects that idea and asks:

But why, Saru? Come on, I know you're joking." On my salary?
Come on, Saru, don't be silly. You know how much I earn. You think we can live this way on that?. Can you bear to send the children to a third – rate school? To buy them the cheapest clothes, the cheapest of everything?. (81)

In this way, the man-women relationship is very much disturbed in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg. They project the subconscious of the heroine which is hurting them day by day. In this way, they cannot explore their worth in a respectable way. Therefore, this subconscious brings lots of disparities in their life.

Marital Rape: A Mental Trauma

Shashi Deshpande presents the most crucial issues in this novel that is marital sex. Marital sex in *That Long Silence* falls along well-defined lines is that of many Indians. Jaya the protagonist of the novel longs for communion rather than a mere physical union. She had never spoken of her feeling to him: "In fact had never spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was erased each time after it happened; it never existed in the word" (95). She describes her relationship which is only physical as she further says: "My need was now less: I could stay apart from him without a tinge. I could sleep with him too, without desire" (97). In the Indian society Women married off with the strangers and they don't have the compatibilities.

These social taboos associated with marriages which make her woman. Jaya comes out with this situation and suffering between her self-respect and her body. Bound in the traditional role of wife, she has become an asexual being, In a comparison of Saru Manisha and Jaya is facing a different situation that

accelerates the sexual degeneration between Jaya and Mohan. Jaya's marriage is arranged by her elders and she is experiencing sex before love. She is expected to play a passive role contrary to her rebellious nature. Jaya analyses the illusory nature of love and she says, "Love is a myth, without which the sex with the same person for a lifetime would be unendurable." (97). She undergoes hysterical experience when Mohan leaves the house. She feels deserted. In her loneliness, she realises and understands what karma her neighbour said to her that "pursuit of happiness is meaningless" and loneliness is essential to the condition of human existence. Everyone has to fight his own battle. She understands that she contributed to her victimisation. Neither total extinction of the ego, nor the complete conformity can bring her realisation of her true identity. Jaya has fathomed the darkness of herself and has learnt to articulate her predicament.

The Binding Vine revolves around the lives of three women who are suffering in their situation. Urmi, an upper-middle-class woman, is the central character. Urmi is anguished over the death of her baby daughter the second woman Mira is Urmi's mother-in-law who exists only in the notebooks she has left behind. They are discovered by chance in a trunk. The third woman Kalpana, a survivor of brutal rape forced silence. She is between life and death and watched by her mother with whom Urmi forms an unlikely bond of mutual comfort. The lives of three women are haunted by fears, secrets and deep grief and bonded together by hope. Kishore the archetypal Indian husband never understands the depth of Urmi's feelings. From the very first night of their wedding, she feels distanced from Kishore. She realises that "He Looked trapped" (137).

Shakutai's daughter Kalpana is a victim of rape and is fighting between life and death in a hospital ward. Urmi fights for her rights. Kalpana's tragedy is compared with Urmi's mother-in-law's tragedy. "What has happened to Kalpana happened to Mira too" (78). Kalpana was raped by her uncle. Her situation is similar to Mira who was a victim of marital rape. Both were victims of the same crime but in different situations. *The Binding Vine* deals with the theme of the quest for identity.

Women play different roles as a wife, mother, sister and daughter, she has never been able to claim her own individuality. The absence of Kishore brings

about frustration and loneliness in Urmi's life but she intelligently overcomes these problems. She takes a stern decision to stand strong and live for her son Karthik. She believes she can manage everything. Her consciousness assures her that she is strong enough to live on her own. In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* Saru describes her situation and her sexual relationship with her husband she says:

The hurting hands, the savage teeth, the monstrous assault of a horribly familiar body. And above me, a face I could not recognise. Total non-comprehension, complete bewilderment, paralyzed me for a while. Then I began to struggle. But my body, hurt and painful, could do nothing against the fearful strength which overwhelmed me. (112)

Shashi Deshpande describes the marital rape which has become a major issue. In this way, Saru describes her situation in which she is going through. She is facing a forced sexual relationship which has become a major issue in Indian society. The man considers a woman a sex object they do not care about the consent of their partner. Thus, Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg have projected the male-dominated society and major issues which are demeaning the female identity day by day.

Virginia Wolf, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar describe the historical perspective in order to understand the female identity. They stress that women can be on the right path towards comprehending their identity and position if they look back and have a look at what has happened with their mothers and grandmothers. The feminist movement has much written on women, but much still remains to be done to reflect the injustice to women and also to rid the male psyche of the prejudices and misconceptions regarding them. As Simone de Beauvoir writes in her book *The Second Sex*:

All agree in recognising the fact that the female exists in the human species; today as always they make up about one half of humanity. And yet we are told that femininity is in danger, we are exhorted to be women, then and that every human being is not necessarily a woman to be considered she must share in that mysterious and

threatened reality known as femininity. In this attribute something secreted by the ovaries? Or is it a platonic essence, a product of the philosophic imagination.(35)

She describes the inequalities which are in the societies. She describes the sexuality of a woman that is hidden due to traditional bound society. She describes that,"Love?Romance? Both, I knew too well, were illusions, and not relevant to my life anyway. And the code word of our age is neither love nor romance, but sex. Fulfilment and happiness came, not through love alone, but sex. And for me, sex was now a dirty word" (133).The novels of Shashi Deshpande present the women in changing times. Her novels are a reflection of the real-life struggles of middle-class women. By presenting women protagonists as progressive and assertive, she beautifully exposes the patriarchal domination and the socio-cultural mindset. Shashi Deshpande's novels reflecting their high critical mind of women's identity seems to reveal the essential and typical theme of feminist literature. There are repeated instances in her works to ascertain that the problems of women result from the long process of socio-cultural conditioning, personal experiences and impressions in man-woman relationships. As she said in her interview:

Human relationship is what a writer is involved with person to person to social relationship. These are the two primary concerns of a creative writer and, to me, the former is of immense importance. My preoccupation is with the interpersonal relationship and Human emotions. (qtd. in Dubey 56)

A continuous negotiation between the socio-cultural norms and individual urges which firmly establish her novels as a discourse of muted women's culture can be noticed in her works. Marriage, in fact, becomes only another enclosure for women that restrict the movement towards autonomy and self-realisation. It fails to provide them with love and freedom and therefore, the protagonists resort to extra-marital relations. Female identity is a social construction due to male dominance, patriarchal setup, and gender discrimination. Women feel inferior because of the power and privilege which men enjoy over women and women, who are exploited in every way and they do not have any power in social, economic, and political

affairs. Females have been judged by their biological structure and these differences construct their social identities.

Therefore, a woman has to suffer as she has no identity of her own. There is a definite pattern of advancement in terms of relationships in these novels of Mridula Garg. There is an outward movement from personal relationships towards society as we move from *A Touch of Sun* to *Chittacobra* and onward to *Country of Goodbyes*. Manisha in *A Touch of Sun* frees herself from dependency on relationships and realizes that a purposeful work which can bring some change in the world gives meaning to one's life. Manisha intends to use her writing for this purpose. Manu in *Chittacobra* goes through the same realisation and overcomes her obsessive preoccupation with Richard to finally find the path of service to people in need. This journey from the 'other' to 'others' is reinforced in *Country of Goodbyes* where the main characters not only empower themselves and free themselves from the bondage of relationships but extend their lives to include in their sphere those who are in less advantageous positions.

Therefore, a progression of relations from individual to society is perceptible in those novels and grows stronger in every text. Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg reveals their deep insight into the plight of Indian women, who feel smothered and flattered in a tradition-bound society. These novels delineate the women characters in the light of their hopes, fears, aspirations and frustrations. They find themselves thwarted by the opposition and pleasure from a society conditioned overwhelming by the patriarchal mindset. Their situation highlights the women's position and their inferior position and the subsequent degradation in a male-dominated society. In the novels, women protagonists are victims of the prevalent gross gender discrimination, first as a daughter and later as wives.

They are conscious of the social inequality and injustice towards them and struggle against the oppressive and unequal nature of the social norms and rules that limit their capabilities. These novels are a depiction of the anguish and the conflict of the modern educated middle-class women. There is an honest portrayal of their fears, sufferings, disappointments and frustrations. Besides revealing the woman's struggle to secure self-respect and self-identity, the authors lay bare the multiple levels of oppression, including sexual oppression. These conditions

highlight the consequences and circumstances and explore the psyche of middle-class women within their marriages and workplaces and in their family life.

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Chapter 3

Delineating the Socio-Political Construction of Sex /Gender in the Society

Gender discrimination is a profoundly critical concern for a woman where gender is critiquing one's entity. Gender discrimination has always been a major aspect of demeaning female's identity. Women are judged by their biological differences. Biological differences construct the major manifestations which describe the societal scenarios. The society constructs various kinds of norms which fabricate the gender from sex. Sex and gender are the two terms. The term sex is related to the biological differences and gender describes what it means to be male or female. When sex becomes gender then it makes the socialisation of the sex in the society. The socialisation of sex is a focused form of cultural norms. Simultaneously, these two terms are interchangeable. Sex is a biological form and gender refers to the roles which are meant to be performed. As Judith Butler says about the gender performativity in her book *Gender Trouble* that "there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performativity constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its results" (Butler 34). In this context gender is a socially constructed term which creates the socialisation of sex. In the society, there are some norms and roles which are decided by the culture and people to be performed in the social scenario. In the society female is discriminated by her biological differences, therefore, Simon de Beauvoir explains female's implicit form which a man denies to show her masculinity. She says in her book *The Second Sex*:

She is a womb an ovary she is a female this word is enough to define her from a man's mouth the epithet female sounds like an insult but he is not ashamed of his animality is proud to hear he's a male. (41)

Gender relations are generally experienced as natural rather than as a created cultural and social process. It is also a biological fact that women get pregnant and give birth to an infant and have the capacity to breastfeed them. On the other way, a man feels the immense pride that he is a male with no biological deformity.

Therefore, Ammy Wharton is an American Author describes the social agency which constructs the process of being male and female and he opines,

“Processes through which individuals take on gendered qualities and characteristics and learn what their society expects of them as males or females” (31). Thus, in the society, the characteristics are decided for women and they supposed to think that they are biologically inferior to a man that is naturalised. In this way, the social construction of gender developed in the cultural circumstance which is associated with the sexed body. Once gender is understood as culturally constructed it is possible to avoid the essentialist idea that gender derives from the natural body in any one way. Karen Horney describes in her book *Feminine Psychology* that:

Even more relevantly for thinking about gendered social structure, that women envy not the biological penis, but what it signifies—social power and authority. Many contemporary feminist psychoanalytic theorists have argued for the powerful influence of social structure in creating and constraining the range of emotional and other associations individuals may have to particular social, interpersonal, and individual objects and symbols.(Horney 62)

Gender is a social construction that divides powers. It is therefore also a political system. In this way, over time, women have been economically exploited, relegated to domestic slavery, forced into motherhood, sexually objectified, physically abused, used in denigrating entertainment, deprived of a voice and authentic culture, and disenfranchised and excluded from public life. Culture is an essential aspect that makes women think that biological disposition is their social identity. Similarly, these practices demean women by fabricating the equality in them just because of power which subjugates female identity.

Gender Identity:

An individual’s personal sense of maleness and femaleness is his or her gender identity. So, the cultural and social roles make this sense of an individual. As Butler describes the gender identity that, “gender identity is simply a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (Butler 33). In this way, the cultural norms established the way to perform different roles in society. In which these norms make it sure that these gender identities are natural and legitimate. According to Erik Erikson:

Identity is an emergent structure of personality that develops throughout the lifespan but takes on organization and significance in adolescence. He argued that identity is composed of many disparate elements, including one's identification with one's own past experience, with particular characteristics and traits, with ideas and ideologies, and with a defined place in the social structure. Adolescence is critical to this theory because identity is a self-conscious structure that depends on a certain degree of cognitive understanding of both the self and the social structure; it is also critical because it is a period during which certain kinds of social affirmation. (Erikson 34)

Erik Erikson describes the identity that how it constructs in society and how it brings the gender identity in a certain mode of social construction in society. In society, gender is constructed in this way that all the traditional roles, customs, culture and ideologies are attached to that particular gender. As Shawn Meghan Burn describes in his book *Psychology of gender* he opines, "Those Psychologists prefer the word gender because it includes the idea that many differences between men and women are culturally created while the word sex implies that differences are caused directly by biological sex" (19). Beauvoir writes, "While the boy seeks himself in his penis as an autonomous subject, the little girl pampers her doll and dresses her as she dreams of being dressed and pampered; inversely, she thinks of herself as a marvelous doll". (293)

Gender inequality denotes to social and cultural analysis of individuals based on their gender. Therefore, sex takes the shape of gender to establish one's identity. Thus, inequality ascends from differences which are related to social taboos. Feminism developed the theory of the social construction of women on the bases of their biological differences to enhance women autonomy. The feminists explore the distinction between sex/gender that describes the biological category of sex and the social category of gender. Thus, this socialisation process constructs inequality between male and female on the bases of biological differences. Social norms represent masculinity to male and femininity to female. This representation in the society that is masculinity and femininity have always been judged by the biological differences. Wherein, the woman is 'penis envy' for

the privilege that belongs to the male which divides the powers between male and female due to inequality. This relation represents the patriarchal power that dominates women in the socio-political scenario. Thereby, in the Sociopolitical scenario as Knellwolf describes that, "wishing to break away from patriarchal representation and their normative function in the socialization of boys and girls, they proposed the language of irrationality as a possible subversion of the rigours of logic". (Knellwolf 200)

Patriarchy characterises oppress women through its political, economic and social institution. Masculinity takes advantages over femininity. A political theorist Carole Pateman writes in her book *The Sexual Contract*, "The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection" (Pateman 207). Women are exploited in the patriarchal manifestation due to gender discrimination. In this context, patriarchy has the power to demean the female identity. Patriarchal ideology drives the social institution which takes place in the political scenario to oppress women. Therefore, gender subjugation creates the socio-political powers which construct the disparities between man and woman. As Michel Foucault describes that body is the primary concern of power to target women's body and mind in the social premise. In his book *History of Sexuality* Michel Foucault describes:

The notion of sex brought about a fundamental reversal; it made it possible to invert the representation of the relationships of power to sexuality, causing the latter to appear, not in its essential and positive relation to power, but as being rooted in a specific and irreducible urgency which power tries as best it can to dominate. (Foucault 155)

Thus, he further says about the sex which the male dominance represents the powers to oppress the female as she is biologically different from man and he describes about the sex that, "On the contrary, sex is the most speculative, most ideal, and most internal element in a deployment of sexuality organized by power in its grip on bodies and their materiality, their forces, energies, sensations, and pleasures" (155). As Simon de Beauvoir describes in her book *The Second Sex* she says:

Female exists in the human species, today as they always make up about one half of humanity. And yet we are told that femininity is in danger, we are exhorted to be women, remain women and become women. It would appear then, that every female human being is not necessarily a woman, to be so considered she must share in that mysterious and threatened reality known as femininity. Is this attributing something secreted by ovaries? Or it is a platonic essence, a product of the philosophic imagination. Woman is to man a sexual being; a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities, 'a natural defectiveness', 'an incidental being', and above all she is the other, she is woman by virtue of her anatomy and physiology and since ages, she has lacked masculine consideration and respect in history. (58)

Female has been subjugated by her biological differences because society imposes all the norm and tradition as she is the weaker sex. Female's biological differences are the natural thing which can't make her subjugate in terms of her biological structure. In this way, Simon de Beauvoir encapsulates her view on the term femininity in danger. Gender makes the female inferior in order to oppress in the male-dominated society. Therefore Abbott and Wallace opine, "the power of men over women is collective society's sexist assumptions advantage all men patriarchal ideologies support and sanction the power of men over women" (Abbott and Wallace 18). On the bases of sexist assumptions, all the powers availed by the male due to the patriarchal ideology. Therefore, Witting quoted in the book *Gender Trouble*:

A materialistic approach shows that what we take for the cause or origin of oppression is in fact only the mark imposed by the oppression; the myth of woman and its material effects and manifestation in the appropriated consciousness and bodies of women. Thus...this mark does not pre-exist oppression....sex is taken as an immediate given, a sensible given, physical features, belonging to a natural order but what we believe to be a physical and direct perception is only a sophisticated and mythic construction, an imaginary formation. (qtd. in Butler 34)

Witting describes that the term sex denotes to biological differences between man and woman. All the myths are constructed in the society which makes a woman from a child. From ancient times, myths are related to female's biological differences which make them inferior in society. According to Kate Millett "male and female are considered as being part of two different cultures that are constructed from childhood" (31). Kate Millet gives the description of a different culture for male and female which is created in the society by patriarchal ideology. Feminist theorists have argued that in any of the historical forms that patriarchal society takes, whether it is feudal, capitalist or socialist, a sex-gender system and a system of economic discrimination operate simultaneously. Judith Butler describes that "Gender proves to be a performance that constitutes the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed."(25). Feminism is trying to overcome the biological differences by its emerging trends. Contemporary critics help to understand gender politics in society.

Therefore this chapter is conscripting the agencies which are causes and roots of socio-political construction of sex and gender. Thus, Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg are the novelists who describe the patriarchal social structure in which women suffer due to their biological differences and they have lost their identity. Mridula Garg also explores the woman's sexuality in the society that a female has every single right to talk about her sexuality and feel her sexual instincts. In the Indian society female meant to be shy about her sexual desires. Erkki Savanen quoted Mridula Garg's view in the book *Cultural Identity in Transition she says that:*

Can the novels were written by a woman in India really be called feminist, or are they merely novels written by writers who happen to be a woman? If by feminist writing we mean texts that project a unique worldview different from the historically accepted worldview of men, then most writing by women in India cannot be called feminist. It is definitely a set in the direction of feminist writing in as much as it looks at women as a unique class. (418)

On the other way, Shashi Deshpande describes the feminist view and says:

It is not a theory. It is not Simone de Be Beauvoir's tradition of women's writing in male culture, women writers often invent strategies to cope up with two opposite pulls their creative urge... and their need for acceptance in a patriarchal set-up.(391)

Deshpande, through her characters, offers a canvas to the readers where their conflicts, anger and frustrations are brought out vividly. As a writer, Deshpande proffers feminist critiques of the male-dominated Indian culture because she finds it difficult to admit that everything is right with the patriarchal traditions. Both the writers project their characters prominent themes which highlight the causes of the construction of gender.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination is a nonetheless pervasive aspect. Many institutions of society, such as the media, family, childcare institutions or schools, preserve and transmit stereotypes about men and women. Traditional gender traits are often related to power: men and their typical activities are characterized as outgoing, strong, productive, brave, important, public-oriented, and influential and having high financial rewards and social recognition and value. Women's key characteristics reflect powerlessness: dependent, caring, passive and family-oriented. Women often hold subordinate positions, their work is less valued and it receives less recognition and remuneration. Girls or boys who do not conform to stereotypical expectations can experience criticism, ostracism and even violence. As Simon de Beauvoir explains:

The same drama of flesh and spirit and of finitude and transcendence plays itself out in both sexes both are eaten away by time stalked by death they have the same essential need of the bother; and they can take the same glory from their freedom if they knew how to savour, they would no longer be tempted to contend for false privileges and fraternity could then be born between them. (12)

Shashi Deshpande has presented a realistic picture of the gross-gender inequality prevailing in our society. In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* on one occasion Saru presents rigid thinking for man and woman in the marriage in which society makes difference. She says:

A wife must always be a few feet behind her husband. If he is an MA, you should be a BA; if he is 5'4" tall, you shouldn't be more than 5'3" tall. If he is earning five hundred rupees, you should never earn more than four hundred and ninety, if you want a happy marriage; don't ever try to reverse the doctor, nurse, executive, secretary, principal, teacher role. It can be traumatic, disastrous; and I assure you, it is not worth it. He'll suffer. You'll suffer and so will the children. Women's magazines will tell you that a marriage must be an equal partnership. That's nonsense, rubbish. No partnership can ever be equal, it will always be unequal, but take care that it is unequal in favour of your husband. If the scales tilt in your favour, god helps you, both of you. (137)

According to Beauvoir a woman is objectified and pushed to the lower rung of the social ladder by superior male consciousness and a man's dominant position in society by controlling the economic, political and religious front, which she puts as:

A woman is defined exclusively in her relation to man. Beauvoir explains this dependency of women on relationships with men, "the girl, since childhood and whether she intends to stay within or go beyond the bounds of femininity, has looked to the male for fulfilment and escape. he is the liberator; he is rich and powerful, he holds the key to happiness . (328)

The asymmetry of the categories of male and female has been manifested in the unilateral form of sexual myths. In the novel, *Dark Holds No Terror* Shashi Deshpande also describes the childhood miserable childhood memories of a girl child who are continuously haunting in her mind. Saru the protagonist of the novel has been discriminated for her colour, gender since her childhood which haunts her throughout her life. Saru recollects her childhood memories and says that "there was always a Pooja on Dhruva's birthday, a festive lunch in the afternoon

and an aarti in the evening. My birthdays were almost the same – but there was no Pooja” (Deshpande168-169). Son preference in Indian society is one of the main concerns for the parents; they always get conscious of their son rather than a daughter. Saru the protagonist of the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* is extremely disturbed in her life whole life by this gender discrimination. Saru’s mother instructs her:

You will never be good looking. You are too dark for that. How many times must I call you? Looking at yourself in a mirror! I’ll give you a certificate to say that you are Beautiful. Will, that satisfies you?. (61)

In Indian society, people make a female inferior due to her colour complexion and her physical appearance. As the novel describes a mother-daughter relationship that how can a mother say to her daughter that she is not beautiful. Saru faces conflicts just because of gender discrimination as her mother loves her son more than her daughter. Therefore, Helen Cixous argues that:

We’ve been turned away from our bodies, shamefully taught to ignore them, to strike them with that stupid sexual modesty; we’ve been made victims of the old fool’s game. Women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will partition classes and rhetoric, regulations and codes, they must submerge, cut through, get beyond the ultimate reserve discourse. (Cixous 355)

Simone de Beauvoir describes in her book *The Second Sex*, opines that a Woman is defined exclusively in her relation to man. The asymmetry of the categories- male and female has been manifested in the unilateral form of sexual myths. As in *The Dark Holds No Terror* Saru suffered from gender discrimination As she thinks, But of my birth, my mother had said to me once... ‘It rained heavily the day you were born. It was terrible.’ And somehow, it seemed to me that it was my birth that was terrible for her, not the rains (169). The mother slips no opportunity to pour her venomous words into the ears of Saru. She blamed her for her unfortunate birth in her house she blamed her for her brother’s death.

You killed your brother. I didn't. Truly I didn't. It was an accident. I loved him, my little brother. I tried to save him. Truly I tried. But I couldn't. And I ran away. Yes, I ran away, I admit that. But I didn't kill him. How do you know you didn't kill him? How do you know?. (146)

Therefore she recalls her childhood memories and explains her experiences in the novel that what kind of behaviour a female should have throughout of her life. Saru still remembers her mother's bitter words uttered when a little girl was unable to save her younger brother from drowning. In the quite of her old father, but in reality to escape the nightmarish brutality her husband inflicts on her every night. She struggles with her emotions and anxieties, Saru gradually realises that there is no more to life than dependency on marriage, parents, and other such institutions. In this way Saru explains the gender roles which are imposed on female:

As a child, they had told me I must be obedient and unquestioning. As a girl, they had told me I must be meek and submissive. Why? I had asked. Because you are a female. You must accept everything, you are a girl.... It is the only way, they said, for a female to live and survive. (158)

Similarly, in the novel, *A Matter of Time* Aru; daughter of Gopal always think that the major problem of her father's separation from her mother is the preferences of a son. Her grandfather is also humiliating her grandmother and then she says that "Amma, I'm here, I'm your daughter, Amma, I'm your son, I'm here with you, Amma, I'm here . . ." (233). Throughout her childhood, she was suffering this cause that her family is lacking something that is a male child. Mridula Garg in the *A Touch of Sun* projects protagonist Manisha who shows the man's cruelty towards a woman and she says, "It's you who hate sentimentality, not I am not afraid of that word. What I'm afraid of is cold-bloodedness and rationality of a man who does not know how to, who does not wish to love" (136). She doesn't understand how to deal with her husband and Jiten's indifference and unconcern towards her as he is always occupied with his work: "She felt very jealous of him. Why can't she be busy like him? After all, she too works, teaches in a college, runs the house, and writes stories too, once in a while. Why can she not

fill her time?" (65). Mridula Garg points at the difference in the outlook of Jiten who gives more importance to his work. Beauvoir explains this difference aptly:

The individual who is a subject, who himself extends his grasp on the world: he is ambitious, he acts destined to the male from the childhood the woman who has not repressed her claim to humanity will dream of transcending her being toward one of these superior beings, of amalgamating herself with the sovereign subject". (643)

In this way, a man always shows his superiority complex. In the novel *Country of Goodbyes* in which Aseema was projecting her discrimination as Aseema name was given by her parents which means boundaries. Her consciousness denies that name because she did not want to live any kind of constraint, therefore, she refuses to take that name, so she changes her name Seema to Aseema, "Boys are often named Aseema, though. I suppose that's what male chauvinism is all about. Girls have to remain within limits while boys are free to cross them"(142). As Berg encapsulates her view on the freedom of woman of the sexist way he says:

It is the freedom to decide her own destiny –freedom from sex determined role – freedom from society's oppressive restrictions, freedom to express her thoughts fully and to convert them freely into action. Feminism demands the acceptance of women's right to individual conscience and judgement. It postulates that woman's essential worth stems from her common humanity and does not depend on the other relationship of her life. (qtd in Bell hooks 24)

Therefore, as Berg describes his views on the freedom of every aspect of a woman's freedom. Gender discrimination constraints all the freedom of a woman. She can't decide her destiny because sex determined roles bind her with a limited situation. Society oppresses a woman by their prefixed expectations. Thus, feminist critics raise their voice for their freedom. In this context, Marianne is very progressive towards her carrier in spite of her exploitation in the past in the novel *Country of Goodbyes*. Her brother in law raped her and her husband exploited her mentally and physically. She wants to get rid of her trauma and she decided to pen

down and explored her talent. She remains hopeful that the time will come when she will get recognition for her work. She says:

Who knows, a time may come when it is critiqued and reassessed; it is possible that feminist critics will uncover my primary role in its creation. Right now it is laughable that renowned critics declare that such a powerful and convincing interpretation of History could only be done by a man! Women can neither be so objective nor indulge in such flights of fantasy. Connected as they are to the earth, they are essentially pragmatic—abstract thought and a historical sense are obscured by their immediate experiences. (84)

In this context, a female has been discriminated due to her gender, biological structure abilities, and her knowledge. Discrimination develops due to the surroundings, ideology, and beliefs that can be called cultural aspects. Culture has played a pivotal role which created all the taboos to oppress a female.

Culture

Culture is the inescapable aspect which has become the main cause of suppression of women. Culture refers to that array of practices, rituals, language, and symbolic structures that constitute meaningful pursuits for many people. The conception of value that structures and guides life is often made meaningful by its place in a historically grounded network of symbolic understanding. One's identity, in fact, is often constituted by relations with such cultures. Culture is, therefore, a total way of life. In the words of Clyde Kluckhohn an American anthropologist describes in his book *Culture and Behaviour*.

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts: the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other hand, as conditioning elements of further action. (181)

As Beauvoir opines how gender is constructed in society. Gender, in her view, is “a corporeal locus of cultural possibilities both received and innovated” (Butler 37). In this context, Burn writes, “In most contexts, psychologists prefer the word ‘gender’ because it includes the idea that many differences between men and women are culturally created while the word ‘sex’ implies that the differences are caused directly by biological sex” (19). *The Dark Holds No Terror* manifests culturally constructed aspects which make gender discrimination very miserable. The protagonist Saru going through that makes them inferior to move in society. Her mother makes her colour complex a priority which demeans her autonomy to establish in the social world. Her mother warns her and says:

Don’t go out in the sun. You’ll get even darker. Who cares? We have to care if you don’t. We have to get you married. I don’t want to get married. Will you live with us all your life? Why not? You can’t And Dhruva? He’s different. He’s a boy”. (45)

In this context, Butler gives her point of view that in the social-cultural phenomena makes the male and female think that the identities are not fixed. These are changing in the cultural context by time to time. The political philosophy takes advantage of the social construction of sex and imposes all the norms on women which create the obstacle in the female establishment. In this way, social-political construction of sex takes places which make the disparities between male and female. Albeit, Butler determines in *Gender Trouble* that:

If identities were no longer fixed as the premises of a political syllogism, and politics no longer understood as a set of readymade subjects, a new configuration of politics would surely emerge from the ruins of the old. Cultural configurations of sex and gender might then proliferate or, rather, their present proliferation might then become articulable within the discourses that establish intelligible cultural life, confounding the very binarism of sex, and exposing its fundamental unnaturalness. (Butler 149)

In the same context Beauvoir explains this dependency of women in relationships with men, "the girl, since childhood and whether she intends to stay within or go beyond the bounds of femininity, has looked to the male for fulfilment

and escape . . . he is the liberator; he is rich and powerful, he holds the key to happiness . . ." (328). In society, parents would like to give dowry rather than to spend money on their education. Saru's mother describes the whole situation of society and says her daughter that:

'But she is a girl'.

Yes, I'm a girl. But it's more than that. I'm not Dhruva.

'Well, plenty of girls go in for medicine now.'

'Yes, but they're girls whose fathers have lots of money.

You don't belong to that class.

And don't forget, medicine or no medicine, doctor or no

doctor, you still have to get her married, spend money on her

Wedding. Can you do both?."(144)

The protagonist Saru wants to study medicine and pursue her study further and her mother gives her two options whether she has to study or has to get married. Marriage has become a complicated issue in society. Saru describes her married life in the novel *Dark Holds No Terror* which encapsulates the view that marriage is not only the aspect in which a girl should wait all her life. Therefore Linda Thompson describes the cultural innovations about gender and she says: People do not simply conform to cultural scripts about gender. The challenge, resist and create their own gender strategies. People use their personal innovations and struggles in everyday family life to transform culture and society. She says marriage becomes their destiny as Jaya thinks:

As we grew into young women, we realized it was not loved, but a marriage that was the destiny waiting for us. And so, with a young man, there was the excitement of thinking will this man be my husband?It had been our parents who had taken vague desires of ours and translated them into hard facts. It was like the game we had played as children on our buttons tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor.
(19)

Smith describes in the book *Media Gender and Identity: An introduction*:

Marriage has declined as the central institution under which households are organized and children are raised. People marry later and divorce and cohabit more. A growing proportion of children have been born outside of marriage. Even within marriage, the changes have been profound as more and more women have entered the labour force and gender roles have become more homogenous between husbands and wives. (Smith 10)

In this same context that has been discussed above as Mridula Garg explores marriage disharmony which she describes in her novel *A Touch of Sun*. She reveals the desire of man to control a woman and man-woman possession. In the novel, Mohan Manisha's husband says to Manisha that "So I cannot hand over my possession calmly to others ' ' "Your possessions... that is."You." "I am your possession!" she hissed. "Of course. It is not only I who love you. You have loved me too. So you are my possession and I yours." "Thanks. But I don't consider your possession of mine." "That's your affair. I do. And I will not put up with faithlessness" (48-49). With the passing time, they think marriage has been not working for both of them and they are lurking in the dilemma that who is the possession of whom. Mridula Garg is explaining the biological difference of man and woman who possessed each other's way although they don't have any interest in each other.

Judith Butler's describes that culture is the main trait that constructs the gender discrimination as "cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "natural sex" is produced and established as...prior to culture" (7). Jaya once tells Kamat (her neighbour) ".....no women can be angry. Have you ever heard of an angry young woman? A woman can never be angry, she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated" (147). In this way, culture constructs all the role and behaviour for men and women which are meant to be performed. Patriarchal ideology takes advantage of the cultural construction which resists the female to chase in the social, economic and political scenario. Adrienne Rich defines patriarchy as:

A familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language,

customs etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. (67)

In this context to demolish the patriarchal scenario, in the novel *Chittacobra* the protagonist Manu rebels the society, she is a married woman, a wife and a mother. She is a passionate lover. An extramarital affair is not acceptable in society. She is free from all the burden of norms and tradition of the society. She is not happy with her husband Mahesh because he has no time for her wife. She establishes a relationship with a priest Richard. In this novel, Mridula Garg explores the female's sexual instincts in the male-dominated society. She challenges the hierarchal ideology which always celebrates the masculine constitutions.

In the social-cultural scenario as it makes gender discrimination on the other hand in the novel *Chittacobra* she explores the female sexual desires of an Indian modern woman. Simon de Beauvoir says: "It is not concerned to establish individual relations with a chosen mate but to carry on the feminine functions in their generality; she is to have sex pleasure only in a specified form and not individualized" (Beauvoir 435). At the beginning of the novel, the protagonist describes self-happiness and others happiness. Manu thinks to see people at the party, "They danced because everyone danced. Theirs was societal happiness. They danced with a new partner each time in step with the social protocol. They were not there to break rules; No one would dare dance alone" (6-7). In this situation she encapsulates societal norms that people are performing their role as the society does, they can't break the monotony. In this way, she describes her own desires which are repressed.

This novel is all about the Richard and Manu which describes their individual spirits and societal norms. As she says in the novel *Chittacobra*, "Forget yourself for a second and the parted lips begin to tremble, the eyes shine, the teeth blaze. The public person is back to being a unique individual" (34-35). Therefore, Mridula Garg explores female sexuality in a way that she could enjoy her sexual intimacy with whom she can enjoy. As Christine opines her view to explore the female identity in terms of her freedom towards her sexual instincts

and says: "The sexes must jointly take active responsibilities for mutually pleasurable sex, both because justice demands it, and because the more active participant to sex is, the more sexually satisfied he or she is likely to be" (146). Mridula Garg's protagonist Manu enjoys her sexual intimacy with a priest Richard in her extramarital affair in which she discusses all her pleasurable sexual experience. In this way: Michel Foucault describes his point of view on sexual freedom and he says:

And the sexual cause-the demand for sexual freedom, but also for the knowledge to be gained from sex and the right to speak about it-becomes legitimately associated with the honour of a political cause: sex too is placed on the agenda for the freedom. (67)

In *The Dark Holds No Terror*, Saru explains her sexual relations with Manohar, her husband, that, "He had been the young man and me his bride. Now I was the lady doctor and he was my husband." (76) Saru finds in him a 'protean monster' at night and a 'dutiful husband' in the day. Their sexual life is reduced to macho sadist acts inflicted a woman by a man. She says: "We're on different planes. He chooses his level. And I try to choose the one he would like to be on. It humiliates me." (90). Similarly, *That Long Silence* Shashi Deshpande's first novel describes her sexual life that has been unspoken for Jaya. Jaya, A failed writer is haunted by memories of the past. Differences with her husband, frustration in their seventeen-year-old marriage, disappointment in her two teenage children. Her feelings of love and sex are suppressed as she says:

In any case, whatever my feelings had been then, I had never spoken of them to him. In fact, we had never spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was erased each time after it happened, it never existed in words. The only words between us had been his question, did I hurt you?' and my answer, 'No' (95).

However, Mohan, her husband opposes her writing, and she has to be satisfied by writing short gossip in a magazine column. She cannot become a serious writer, due to her dependence upon her husband and the passivity to surrender herself to the family wishes. She becomes what Mohan wants her to be. As Beauvoir states, "a wife is what her husband makes her" (484). Her aim of

becoming an ideal wife prevents her from rebelling Sumi meets the disapproving comments from women like Shanker's mother and she says:

When are you going back to your husband . . . you should be with him. Look at his state! It's all right to stay with your parents for a while, but that's not your home. When my daughters come home, I don't let them stay long. Go back to your husband, he's a good man. If you've done something wrong, he'll forgive you. And if he has women shouldn't have any pride. (161)

Culture is the one that involves all the set of beliefs, morals, norms and traditions. As the above statement says that, a man is the one who can govern a female and she has no right to think about herself and her pride. All these things are culturally constructed that a man has the power over a woman. Culture also connects with religion to dominate female autonomy. Culture makes things which also relates to the tradition, norms and religion. In this way: religion diverts the thinking of human being for their decision making and their conscious to do or not to do. Religion can also use to demean female emancipation.

Religion

Writing an Introduction to Women in New Religions, Ursula King opens with these words:

Women have always been the biggest "consumers" of religion, but on the whole have been badly served, disparaged and oppressed by religions themselves. In most organised religions to be born a woman is valued as punishment, either for misdeeds in a previous life or for the sin of the first woman.(87)

Religion has also a power to oppress women in order to maintain the patriarchal ideology. Religion and gender have a pivotal relation which brings the cultural, social, political and economic norms to subjugate the female identity. Women play a major role in religious ceremonies and they follow them and pass it on to the coming generation. As in the religious books says about the husband's

power over a woman. As the Bible says: Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church . . . therefore as the Church is subject to Christ so let wives be subject to husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5 verses 22 – 24). In the Hindu Mythology also man is considered as the master of a woman in the tradition of KarwaChauth.

Shashi Deshpande describes Christian mythology in the novel *Moving On* the protagonist as Kalyani brings Christian philosophy of Adam and Eve and their perfect and unsullied life in the Garden of Eden. They were thrown out with one act of disobedience. The author says: “Tone, disobedience is not the original sin; in fact, I do not see it as a sin at all. It is a part of growing up, of moving on, without me serpent we would have remained forever our child-selves, living in a state of innocence, nothing happening, our story stalled. We need the serpent to keep the story moving” (36).

As Mary Daly in her book *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*, points out rightly, the myth of the fall was to reinforce the problem of sexual oppression in society, so that woman's inferior place in the Universe became doubly justified. Not only did she have her origin in man, but she was also the cause of his downfall and all his misery. (Daly 46). Mridula Garg projects her work immensely women-oriented. She put the powerful ideology in her characters the way they express their thought in the male-dominated society. In society, one has to follow societal norms and culture. Culture and religion are both interrelated. In this way Marianne describes the male chauvinistic society she says that:

People call him Jesus, God, Allah and grow weak calling out to him, but he cannot leave his ruthless game to listen, Feminists say they object to the idea of a male god, why can't be a woman? But what difference would that make? Would she stop playing practical jokes on helplessness, helplessness human beings? (88)

Therefore, she describes the religious things to prove the emancipation of women. She opines that in the society the women get attached to religion and they

can't make a decision without her husband's permission as all the religious books say that a husband is the head of the family and a woman should obey her identity. Though, in the society females shape their identity in this way that they construct their identities in order to maintain the social set up. In the comparison of both the novelists, they are different in their thoughts both but the motive is the same for women empowerment.

Roles of Female identity

The role of female identity under the gender subjugation ideology has different attributes to voicing gender identity and describing the essence of a woman. On the basis of gender subjugation, it imposes the socially constructed roles to which constructs the gender identity and impose the gender roles to be performed. Therefore, a female performed her roles which are constructed in society. In this context, Butler's theory of performativity describes gender performances. In this sense, gender has various roles which are constructed in the social and cultural hegemonic ideology. All these gender roles are constituted in the frame of interacting discourses. Therefore in the gender performance, a female is critiquing the different roles and explore her identity. Thus, Anthony Giddens, a British Psychologist describes that:

A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor – important though this is – in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self. (Giddens 54)

Judith Butler describes "there is no gender identity behind the expression of gender identity is discursively constituted..." (Butler 91) Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* challenges the patriarchal postulate She says that "for a woman, as for man, the need for self-fulfilment, autonomy, self-realization, independence, individuality, self-actualization is as important as the sexual need, with as serious consequences, when it is thwarted" (282). In the novel *A Touch of Sun* Manisha, the protagonist of the novel explores her identity. Although her

husband her and boyfriend with him but she was longing for her individuality. Therefore she left both of them and chooses her writing as her carrier and Manisha says:

What she had always dismissed as indifference was really his magnanimity. The most modern of men judges a woman by the relationship she holds to them. She is a daughter ... a sister ... a wife ... the beloved ... Mine.Your . . . his. To be a daughter, sister, wife, beloved, is to belong. To another. But can it describe a woman fully?". (33)

A Touch of Sun describes her protagonist Manisha's survival she chooses her talent of writing for establishing her identity over her husband and boyfriend. She denied the myth that a woman can't survive without a man. Mridula Garg portrays her heroines in a way where gender overcomes all the boundaries. Beauvoir explains her idea that "for a woman to love a man does that is to say in liberty, without putting her very being in question—she must believe herself his equal and be so in concrete fact; she must engage in her enterprises with the same decisiveness" (696). Further, she celebrates her success and she says: "She recalled the moment...yesterday ... when she put her name on her book. Manisha her own name. It had filled her with the sweet intoxication of success hardly ever felt before, certainly not in winning Madhukar's love" "I shall have the satisfaction of knowing I did whatever I could" (160). In this context a famous American feminist and activist Betty Friedan describes about a woman in her book *Feminism and Popular Culture*:

It is urgent to understand how the very condition of being a housewife can create a sense of emptiness, non-existence, nothingness in women. There are aspects of the housewife role that make it almost impossible for a woman of adult intelligence to retain a sense of human identity, the firm core of self or "I" without which a human being, man or woman, is not truly alive.(qtd. in Rebecca and Melanie 84)

To explain the condition of Manisha, Friedan describes the condition of women in the male-dominated society that how they feel emptiness to being a

daughter housewife and mother. Therefore Mridula Garg portrays her women characters in a progressive way. Shashi Deshpande describes her Indian middle-class woman, Jaya a Survivor and an achiever. She resolves to assert her individuality by breaking *That Long Silence*: putting down on paper that in her entire seventeen years of silence she had suppressed her desires. She explains her survival:

This man... it had been a revelation to me that two people a man and woman could talk this way. With this man, I had not been a woman. I had been just myself—Jaya. There had been ease in our relationship, I had never known in any other. There had been nothing I could not say to him. (153)

Mary Evans rightly observes, "There is extensive literature, both fictional and otherwise, which demonstrates the misery inflicted upon human beings by rigidly enforced gender stereotypes: women who have spent their lives in domestic drudgery and men who have endured jobs that they have loathed in the name of social expectations" (80). Therefore, Mridula Garg maintains that gender is socially created and both man and woman are victims of gender fixation in society. Manu is like an actress performing a role without any life in it. She says:

For eight years I had not looked at myself or Mahesh for that matter, with my own eyes. Whichever town we went to big or small, my vision was determined by what the average man thought to be the average view of society. Even when I looked at myself in the mirror, I saw not my face but the image of the average woman acceptable to society. (78)

Manu in the novel *Chittacobra* revolts against this silent hegemony, "I wanted my name. Even if no value was attached to it, I wanted it. I wanted my freedom. I had to have control over my right to surrender" (55-56). *Country of Goodbyes* is all about the loneliness and disappointment of five different characters in their situation as they come together and speak out their lives. As Samita describes her exploitation and humiliation she wants to establish her identity and she pens down for a certain amount of work and says that her self-esteem is raised and she feels a sense of fulfilment on seeing her name written on

her books, "My publisher was right. Once my novel was published, my name became known to the people" (134).Helen Cixous encapsulates her view on the art of writing that:

By writing herself, a woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her ...Write to yourself. Your body must be heard only then will the immense resources of the unconscious spring forth... that will change the rules of the old game. (qtd. in Marks, and Courtivron 250)

On the other hand Marianne immensely upset due to her abortion she describes the whole situation of her life:

But even after all her experiences, Marianne does not turn into a man-hater, "I was angry and upset and found myself cursing and abusing them, but to consider the entire species as male chauvinist pigs were beyond me. Even Now and then George's face rose before my eyes and I would be thrown off the track of women's liberation. On the other face of it learnt to call men male chauvinistic pigs, and acquired other superficial mannerisms which fuelled the fight for women's liberation. (Garg 84-85)

Therefore, Marianne, she wants to prove her point of view that masculinity also has priority over rights and femininity always proves inferior. In this way due to the cultural influences and social norms the gender identity constructs in order to maintain the patriarchal discourse. Gender identity has set rules for male and female and therefore male use her powers over female. Female assert their identity but the society combines all the myths and tradition that divide the powers which make disparities.

Socio-Cultural Aspects: Myths

Myths are the stories that explain the natural occurrences and express the beliefs of right and wrong. It also explains some historical events and some ancient religious practices. Women have not created the virile myth that would reflect their projects; they have neither religion nor poetry that belongs to them alone, they still dream through men's dream undoubtedly there are stylised images

of man as he is in his relations with a woman. They are barely more than clichés, while the woman is exclusively defined in her relation to man. Stephen C. Ausband in his book *Myth and Meaning, Myth and Order*, argues that Mythology is in a very real sense, a language. It allows the user to deal with phenomena in relation to a framework or background of tales. It puts new experiences into a familiar context much as a language does. (Ausband18). Psychoanalytic feminist Carol Gilligan disagrees with this claim and when talking about the development of identity and moral values she explains that “The development of male identity and moral values is represented as universal and objective rather than particular and masculine” (101). In the same context Bell provides an explanation for how gender identities are forged independently for girls and boys in the family setting:

Boys’ identification with masculinity, necessary to attain the correct gender role, happens through rejecting what stands for femininity. Boys come to recognize that what they are supposed to be is what their mothers are not...Rejecting femininity is then consonant with denigrating femininity, so that tasks, traits, and qualities associated with being feminine are considered less socially valuable than are tasks, traits, and qualities associated with being masculine. (156)

Jaya in the novel *That Long Silence* describes the myths, which are always related to females that describe their biological differences? These myths manipulate their psychology and they accept the things in the same manner in which manner it’s present in society. She explains the society’s expectation from a woman and says:

I remember now that he had assumed I would accompany him, had taken for granted my acquiescence in his plans. So had I. Sita following her husband into exile, Savitri dogging Death to reclaim her husband, Draupadi stoically sharing her husband's travails . . . (11)

She expresses complete devotion to her husband. Therefore these myths are also played its roles to make a female inferior to man. Hence women devote herself to her husband in any situation Jaya evocation of the image of Gandhari from the Mahabharata enables her to achieve parity within the mythical past in her attempt to attain ideal wifeness and she says: If Gandhari, who bonded her eyes

to become blind like her husband. Could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too, I banged my eyes tightly” (61). As Gilbert and Gubar point out in their book, *The Mad Woman in the Attic*- “the chief creature man has generated is a woman . . . from Eve, Minerva, Sophia and Galatea onward . . . patriarchal mythology defines women as created by, from and for men, the children of male brains, ribs and ingenuity”. (12)

Though, gender in patriarchal ideology is not simply different but includes division, oppression, inequality as well as interiorized inferiority for women. Culture coding is also a gender discrimination aspect which differentiates the powers of man and woman. Cultural coding constructs gender identity and roles for male and female. Beauvoir's observation is pertinent here, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. No biological, psychological or economic fate determines the figure that the female presence in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature which is described as feminine." (267) As Kate Millet describes in her book *The Sexual Politics* she says that:

This is complemented by a second factor, sex roles, which decrees a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct gesture and attitude for each sex. In terms of activity, sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to the female the rest of human achievements, interest and ambition to the male.(Millet 27)

In the novel *Country of Goodbyes* Aseema says that, "Let any male crossover into my territory and I will break his leg and attach it to his butt like his tail. I detest men”(89). *Country of Goodbyes* describes protagonist Assema breaks all shackles of the traditional society she says: So it that just plain, old-fashioned Seema by my parents and I was just plain, old-fashioned Seema. Limited within boundaries or fetters or whatever. I changed it and made it Aseema, without so much as a by your leave.(142). As in the cultural coding, a man is a masculine power and he uses her masculinity to overcome her frustration as in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* Sarita explains her situation to her father Manohar's inferiority complex resulted in sadism.

He couldn't find any other way satisfy his ego. Sarita confessed to her father that her husband Manohar was a sadist: “He attacked me

like an animal that night. I was sleeping and I woke up and there was this...this man hurting me. With his hands, his teeth, his whole body.”. (Deshpande 201)

To give exploration to masculinity: it also comes with the concept of marriage. Marriage is also a pervasive aspect which is related to the cultural norms that one should marry at the right time. All these cultural codes make them inferior to go ahead. As Jaya says Marriage becomes their destiny:

As we grew into young women, we realized it was not loved, but a marriage that was the destiny waiting for us. and so, with a young man, there was the excitement of thinking will this man be my husband?It had been our parents who had taken vague desires of ours a translated them into hard facts. It was like the game we had played as children on our buttons tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor.
(19)

Such instances of gender discrimination, culture, religion, marriage disharmony make the protagonists inferior in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg that launch a quest for individual identity. Identity is concerned with the self-esteem and self-image of an individual. This search for self- realisation is marked by the protagonists’ urge, attitude, and action to be free. The quest to be free and to realise the self-leads to inner freedom which enables the protagonists to accept their roles, with a new awakening, uncrushed by challenges and hostilities. In the novel, *Dark Holds No terror* Saru encapsulates the cultural coding and remember her childhood days that how the culture decides that a girl should be submissive and meek and a boy should loud and masculinise in the society. In this way, people create gender discrimination on the bases of cultural coding. Therefore she describes her childhood experience in which she has been going through and she says:

As a child, they had told me I must be obedient and unquestioning. As a girl, they had told me I must be meek and submissive. Why? I had asked. Because you are a female. You must accept everything, you are a girl.... It is the only way, they said, for a female to live and survive. (158)

In this way, cultural coding formulates the gender identity in a way which can change the psyche of a human being for his or her entity. Socio-Cultural aspects, Myths, cultural coding all these substances belong to female subordination. These aspects are interrelated i.e gender discrimination makes cultural code which comes from mythical fiction that subjugates women.

Subjugation

Females have been subjugated from ancient times. In the postmodern world, this scenario has changed there is still subjugation but the way has changed. In the society in the middle-class families, women are progressive but the culture, tradition and myths subjugate them. The Indian middle-class women are independent and career oriented still they are suffering in their families, work places and their married life. These issues have become extensively miserable to establish their autonomy. Sometimes they have to get subjugate their selves in the present scenario of their families. As Beauvoir opines that, "If a woman seems to be the inessential which never becomes essential, it is because she herself fails to bring about this change" (115). In this way, Namita's Mother says that :

Give up thinking like this Beti, "She said to tearfully, " it's wrong to find happiness in inflicting pain on your enemy. It harms your soul. You punished him for his bad deeds, that were fine, you supported Namita, good. But why celebrate his pain? What is the difference between you and him then? We are women, we must know how to forgive.(156)

Adrienne Rich in the following words describes, "Though motherhood is the experience of women, the institution of motherhood is under male control and the physical situation of becoming a mother is disciplined by males. This glorious motherhood imposed on women conditions her entire life" (Jha 34). In her book Barara bergs describe the women's emancipation she says:

It is the freedom to decide her own destiny; freedom from the sex-determined role; freedom from society's oppressive restrictions; freedom to express her thoughts fully and to convert them freely into action. Feminism demands the acceptance of women's right to individual conscience and judgment. It postulates that woman's

essential worth stems from her common humanity and does not depend on the other relationships of her life.(24)

Herein, one is reminded of Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" wherein she analyses the subaltern existence of women in patriarchy and looks at women as doubly marginalised subjects in the colonial/post-colonial situation: "Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject the track of sexual difference is doubly affected".

It is rather, that, both as an object of colonialist historiography and as the subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominate, if, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the female as female is more deeply in shadow. (Jha 33)

In the novel *Country of Goodbyes* Samita, A powerful character is disturbed in her life through and through. She suffered in her life and since her childhood and was subjugation because not having a male child in her house, being raped, exploited by her Husband in America. When Mariane asks her that she says: You Forgive him? AS she was about to say yes, Smita paused and grew sad. I did not need her, I knew when to keep quiet. I waited for the silence to grow heavy and break. Aftersome time, Smita let out a long sigh and said, "I will return to India Soon...."(86). The female experience then ought to be looked for, as Rich suggests that:

In the silences, the absences, the unspoken, the encoded- for There we will find the true knowledge of women. And in breaking those silences, naming ourselves, uncovering the hidden, making ourselves present, we begin to define a reality which affirms our being. (qtd in Greene and Kahn 26)

Patriarchal norms are also related to the gender relations it brings the power with itself which create to the social structure to impose all the pre-decided roles on the females. Gender relations refer to a complex system of personal and social relations of domination and power through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to power and material resources or are allocated status within society. In the novel, *Country of Goodbyes* Aseema describes her mother condition and she says that:

My mother was not modern by any usual standards. Her attire, the same old dull, sari, head covered with the pallu, face without a trace of makeup. Her ideas, habits, food, lifestyle all matched the sari. Even her feelings. She was a dutiful daughter, respectful of her parents 'wishes, an ideal candidate for cooking feeding people, enthusiastic about every festival. Ideal housewife, devoted mother, well her boundaries, a satisfied Indian, unchanged since the hoary days of Satyuga.(143)

Shashi Deshpande gives 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. In this way, a male partner not only changes a female's identity from a girl to woman but dominates her whole life to such an extent and she accepts herself as a part of her identity. Therefore in the novel *A Matter of Time*: Aru describes the patriarchal manifestation to explore the gender power relation to marital relation she says:

Marriage makes several contradictory claims on the individuals irrespective of gender. On the one hand, it is based on the domination of the other with the idea of female surrender and subordination built into it. On the other, the romantic notion of love is perceived as a necessary face of desire. Again, while it is the man who decides and works for the position he wants in society, it is the woman who has to dress and act accordingly. Married 173 couples are seen as a unit, inseparable in the public eye. It is not just a power relation, it is also a power game where each is trying to define the other's territory of freedom and choice. And individuals are different in their response to the claims of this relationship.(191)

In this context when Jays starts her piece of work for her interest and she was not appreciated by her husband she says:

I gave up my wirings because of you, 'I said to Mohan and he seemed astonished. Why didn't I speak then, why didn't I explain, Why didn't I remind him of the day he had come back from work carrying a magazine he had thrust at me, saying story is here" Then

she said, “Oh God, Mohan, I’ve won a prize, it’s the story I sent for the context, it’s got a prize.....Mohan’s face had finally silenced my babble, ‘Jaya he had dully, ‘how could you did it?’.’(144)

Kate Millet opines her views on this that: “Conditioning to an ideology amounts to the former sexual politics obtains consent through the socialisation of both sexes to basic patriarchal politics with regard to temperament, role and status” (26). The poems she had written and she has set for the magazine. That is about her experience of her life and her relationship with her husband in this way he did not want to explore the things from her married life. In revert, she says that:

They will all know now, all those people who read this and know us, they will know that two persons are us, they will think I am this kind of man, They will think I am this man. How can I look anyone in the face again? And you, how could you write this thing, how to write such ugly things, How will you face people after this?.(Millet 144-145)

Similarly, Jaya explains her silence that Mohan’s hoarse patriarchal manifestations make her silence cruel. He criticises Jaya’s writings and fends off her to publish that poetry to make him out of the situation. In the society, the female has always been subjugating in every field of her life. In the patriarchal scenario, men do control over women decision making, individuality, sexuality, mobility. All these issues are related to female subjugation. Betty Friedan says:

The feminine mystique permits even encourage women to ignore the question of their identity. The mystique says they can answer the question “who am I?” by saying “Tom’s wife... Mary’s mother” so a woman should possess her independent identity. (37)

Betty Friedan explains the female identity that should be availed by women in every circumstance for her autonomy. She says that the question of Who I am bothering them in their subconscious. In the same context: Shashi Deshpande portrays her preference of daughter over a son. In the novel, *A Matter of Time* Kalyani describes the son and daughter preference and gives her view on the male chauvinistic ideology that “For the desire for wealth and the desire for wealth

is a desire for the worlds... I've always thought that love for daughters is less tainted, more disinterested.”(215)

In this way gender /sex and two interrelated terms which are linked to construct the socio-cultural aspects for the women to subjugate them. In the selected novels both the writers project the real picture of the society by presenting the sufferings, loneliness, desires mental disorders which has been become the main issues in the social milieu. Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg have the same concern for female identity but with a different perspective. In this chapter, both the writers describe the same theme that is the socialisation of sex but with a different point of view. Shashi Deshpande projects her novel's characters with the direct themes but Mridula Garg encapsulates with the hidden meaning. Structure and practices in this same dynamic and dialectical relation, there is always the possibility for change. Every time a little girl minces in her mother's shoes, and every time a little boy swaggers, they are reproducing gender differences. So, the claim goes that the idea of biological sex and the categories of male and female in the biological sense are merely a social construct, illusion collectively held up in society by political charged cultural forces.

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Chapter 4

Domestic Violence as Cause or effect on Female Identity: Comparative Study of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg

“A sense of Identity can be a source not merely a pride and joy but also of strength and confidence” (Sen 3)

The epigraph penned down by Amartya Sen describes that identity builds the strength and confidence of a female which is demeaned frequently by her exploitation in the patriarchal milieu. The word domestic strikes when one thinks the sense of protection, comfort and one's identity. When the word violence adds after it then it leaves simply frustration, mental illness and destruction. Identity is constructed in the domestic sphere and explores one's individuality in order to uphold the consciousness of the subject. As Peter Somerville describes in his Journal *The social construction of Home* “Identity is constructed from the point of view of the conscious of the subject” (234) The domestic space constructed the identity of a subject to give him / her recognition. Domestic space constitutes a space that provides security to women. In ancient times, women were safe in the domestic space. In the contemporary era, the notion has been changed. As Helen Cixous claims that:

Everywhere within discourses, the ordering by binary hierarchy persists... the coupling is always a relationship of violence.... Intention, desire, authority- examine them and you are led back to the father. It is even possible not to notice that there is no place, whatsoever, for a woman in the calculations”. (Cixous 63-64)

The Domestic space has become a vulnerable space for women in society and it has taken the shape of domestic violence. The power politics is demeaning the woman's identity day by day in order to maintain the honour of their family. Domestic violence becomes more hovering which makes female an object in the hands of a male-dominated society. Domestic violence has various types in which a female is suffering distinctively. As Diana Russell describe in her book *Sexual Exploitation* the various types of domestic violence they say:

It includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal, emotional or economic abuse which is also explained under the definition of domestic violence. Domestic violence joins incest, rape, and sexual harassment as another variation of the same problem, the subordination of women in society. (67)

A woman has her own existence and place in the society and therefore she should not be reduced to the level of a breeding machine. She also dares to expose, question and challenge the traditional values and prejudices in the male-dominated society. Females are subjected to continuous physical and sexual assaults in society. In the *Sexual Politics*, Kate Millet opines that “Women are part of a minority group they are treated like slaves because they do not have a lot of rights and they are not equal to men they live for differential and unequal treatment” (55). Females in their domestic space are belonging to the Indian middle-class family and struggle to liberate themselves and seek their self-identity and independence. Domestic violence describes the violence as to how the violence endeavoured in the families.

Violence is an extensive behaviour instinct which includes violence against others as well as oneself. It may result out of frustration, anxiety, alienation, jealousy, ego and male dominance. Violence has become a global phenomenon all over the world. The World Health Organisations (WHO) defines violence in the following way: “Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation” (WHO, 2009). The violence comes with the physical force, rage and all kinds of destruction. It can be conventional violence, community violence and structural violence. Violence can be on one person, on community or on a particular group. It may have many reasons i.e. conflicts, disparities, anger etc. It can be violence against women, Dalit's, poor people to overpower them, or with anyone with whom one has some grudges. It also can take place the domestic violence which has become the offensive phenomena all over the world. Domestic Violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviours, including physical, sexual and psychological

attacks as well as economic coercion that adults or adolescences use against their intimate partners.

Domestic violence comes into consideration as a physical attack of the respondent on an aggrieved person. But has many more forms which define domestic violence thoroughly. It includes causing physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional or economic abuse which are also explained under the definition of domestic violence. In other words, women do not have to suffer a prolonged period of abuse before taking recourse to the law. Data from a recent systematic review by the World Health Organization (WHO) provides similar regional estimates and suggests that women in South-East Asia (defined as India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Timor-Leste) are at a higher likelihood for experiencing partner abuse during their lifetime than women from Europe, the Western Pacific, and potentially the Americas. (WHO 2013). However, keeping in view of the rights guaranteed under Article 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution, the legislation “The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005” was enacted to protect women from being a victim of domestic violence and to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence in the society. Dupont and Sokoloff describe that “Domestic violence is a complex crime against humanity that has been socially constructed over time by a patriarchal system that has encouraged an imbalance of power relationships between men and women for centuries” (42-43). In this context Domestic violence is taking place in society because of the male dominance in society. Domestic violence includes much violence which differentiates the violence that has been taking place in society.

Since ancient times, women have always been under patriarchal dominance. In society, the social set up and the culture and norms are set in this way that male chauvinism is ruling from many ages. Therefore Lerner describes that “There is not a single society known where women-as-a-group have decision-making power over men or where they define the rules of sexual conduct or control marriage exchanges” (30). Violence against women is defined as follows in or likely to result of gender-based violence which results in or likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering of women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life. Physical and mental health aggression, emotional and psychological

abuse, rape, sexual abuse in act rape between spouses, regular or occasional partners and cohabitant's crimes committed in the name of honour, female genital and sexual mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women such as forced marriages. Kate Millet, explains that "they could neither own nor earn in their own rights," and they are treated as "non-persons without legal status" (39). In the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted in 1993, violence against women is seen as:

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women and forced prostitution; and physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs. (United Nations, 1994 Dutton, Kilpatrick.(Friedman & Patel 156)

The socio-psychological behaviour of a person creates a situation of domestic violence. It examines the behaviour, frustration, anxiety and anger of a person who is violent against oneself. Socio-cultural impact also exaggerates the cause of domestic violence. As family and social factor, one of the main reasons for domestic violence is that girl child which makes the problematic situation in the societies. The culture has been more powerful on these issues. Families always prefer a male child over a girl child and they create violence against their families and wives. According to Irigaray, the family has always been the privileged locus of women's exploitation that, "Historically, within the family, it is the father-man who alienates the bodies, desires and work of woman and children by treating them as his own property" (143). As far as domestic violence is concerned families are under the dominance of male powers of their families. Steven R. Tracy opines his views on patriarchy in his article Patriarchy and Domestic violence: Challenging Common Misconceptions that "domestic violence is a consequence of

patriarchy, and part of a systematic attempt to maintain male dominance in the home and in society” (20). Therefore, Patriarchy constitutes the enigma of domestic violence in families. Patriarchal ideology maintains its own culture to dominate the powers of women which are given to them. In this way, Wolfgang and Ferracuti state that “cultural norms or values vary within societies and certain groups in particulars, males, member of the lower socio-economic class and oppressed minorities are accepting violence as a way of life to settle conflict”. There are various aspects of the problem of women namely demand for dowry, sexual assault, female foeticide, trafficking, sexual harassment, but the most vulnerable area is domestic violence.

The concept of sex equality, women's empowerment etc. granted under Constitution of India, but equality of status guaranteed by the Constitution is a myth to millions of women, who are subject to various kinds of violence in their home. In India, domestic violence is widely prevalent but largely invisible in the public domain. Ordinarily laws of cruelty, assault etc. against women was inadequate to deal with violence against women within a domestic relationship. McCue states: “As long as women are not equal to men in all ways, domestic violence will continue to be a problem in our society” (16). McCue encapsulates the whole situation of women’s right in which they are unaware to achieve them. To establish their identity and individuality the need to avail the opportunity to get their right which is given in the Indian constitution.

Since the ancient times, myths are related to the female subordination that a female is born to be shy and society has set a docile image of a female that she has to be meek and submissive in the male-dominated society. Feudalism has also set the position of a female in the society in which all the male prepares to follow in their footsteps. Therefore, Simon de Beauvoir describes that females are not supposed to appear weak, futile, and docile. In this way she says:

The young girl is supposed not only to deck herself out, to make herself ready but also to repress her spontaneity and replace it with the studied grace and charm taught her by her elders. Any self-assertion will diminish her femininity and her attractiveness. (359)

Simon de Beauvoir opines her view on the women's self-assertion which can reduce all myths which are related to women's subordination. As society makes them weak by imposing the culturally constructed norms and women feel that they have some kind of deformity in them. In this way, Beauvoir exposes the spontaneity of women in the patriarchal society which can overpower the feudalism and cultural norms which are demeaning them.

Therefore, in the cultural context dowry is also a major cause behind the Domestic violence in Indian society because in the materialistic society people want to show off their things to the people. Thus a girl brings dowry in her in-law's house if she does not do the same then people harass her mentally, physically and emotionally. Scholar Bowker opines "that male sub-cultures play a role in supporting wife-beating, according to him men who are most integrated into peer subculture which support patriarchal dominance of the family are more severe in causing domestic violence".(73) In this way culture also encapsulates all the norms which create the entire dispute in the families. In the society man-woman relationship binds all the other things in the families. If the relationship is not sound well then it becomes problematic. As Gerda Lerner in his book *Creation of Patriarchy* describes:

It is important to understand that a woman's culture is not and should not be seen as a subculture. It is hardly possible for the majority to wear in the subculture, women voice their social existence within the general culture and wherever they are confined by patriarchal restraint or segregation into separateness they transform this restraint into complementarities (asserting importance and ever superiority of woman's function) and redefine it. Thus, women live in a duality – as members of the general culture and as partakers of women's culture. (Lerner 52)

Gerda Lerner points out that woman's voice is repressed in the culture of male-dominated society which forms the man's culture in order to maintain the decorum of patriarchal ideology. Thus, the relationship between man and woman is not stable due to the disparities. Woodward says about the male dominance that, "males grow up learning that the following elements are essential to

masculinity: do not be female, be successful, be aggressive, be sexual, be self-reliant, embody and transcend traditional views of masculinity (Wood 125). It can be said that culture creates all the rules and norms for males and females. Therefore, society expects from people to be in society from their ideology. In this way, they lack their interest in each other by fulfilling the family's traditions.

Thus, WHO estimated some data for violence against women, following data describes the situation of women in society.

- Global estimates published by WHO indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.
- Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of women who have been in a relationship report that they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime.
- Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.
- Violence can negatively affect women's physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health, and may increase the risk of acquiring HIV in some settings.
- Men are more likely to perpetrate violence if they have low education, a history of child maltreatment, exposure to domestic violence against their mothers, harmful use of alcohol, unequal gender norms including attitudes accepting of violence, and a sense of entitlement over women.
- Women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence if they have low education, exposure to mothers being abused by a partner, abuse during childhood, and attitudes accepting violence, male privilege, and women's subordinate status.
- There is evidence that advocacy and empowerment counselling interventions, as well as home visitation, are promising in preventing or reducing intimate partner violence against women.
- Situations of conflict, post-conflict and displacement may exacerbate existing violence, such as by intimate partners, as well as and non-partner sexual violence, and may also lead to new forms of violence against women.

About the Domestic Violence Act

Domestic violence Act, 2005 contains five chapters and thirty-seven sections. This highlights some of the important provisions which are essential for the nuanced understanding of the statute. The term 'domestic violence' has been used in the widest sense which covers all forms of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic abuse that can harm, cause injury to, endanger the health safety, life, limb or well-being either mental or physical of the aggrieved person.

Laws under the Indian Penal Code

- Dowry Prohibition Act: any property or valuable (direct or indirect) given before, at or after the marriage
- Section 304B: Death of a woman within 7 years of her marriage
- Section 498A: When a husband or his family subjects woman to cruelty ("intentional" behaviour that causes serious injury or harassment for dowry)
- Section 376: Rape law
- Section 294: Obscene acts and songs
- Section 354: Intent to outrage a woman's modesty

Domestic violence is defined in the law as certain criminal acts committed between persons of opposite sex who live together in the same household or who have lived together in the past; or persons who have a child in common or are expecting a child or persons related to one another in the following ways: spouse, child, grandparent, former spouse, brother, grandchild, parent and sister. The criminal acts specifically defined in the law are assault, criminal damage, custodial interference, endangerment, imprisonment, intimidation, kidnapping, trespass, disorderly conduct.

Violence against women is gaining more and more support and recognition, the world over. But despite the enactment of laws, formulation of reformatory legal processes, provision of legal aid to the needy, extensive use of the provision of

Public Interest Litigation, conduct of Family Courts, Women/Family counselling centres, etc., women in India has a long way to go in concretising their Constitutional Goals into reality. Kate Millett observes that “the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance – in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands” (Millett 25). Thus, male dominance creates the disparities between the two sexes which has become one of the main reasons for domestic violence. Domestic violence arises due to the family’s respect, and honour. Therefore, a male dominates a female due to other cultural reasons. As Kate Millet describes that:

The patriarchal force also relies on a form of violence particularly sexual in character and realised most completely in the act of rape. The figure of rapes reported represents only a fraction of those which occur, as the shame of the event is sufficient to deter a woman from the notion of civil prosecution under the public circumstances of a trial. Traditionally rape has been viewed as an offence one male commits upon another matter of abusing his woman. (44)

Domestic violence has many other reasons in families as gender discrimination, dowry, honour etc. In Indian society, gender is also a prominent reason for domestic violence. Indian families, feudalism and culture impose pressure on men to create such violence against her daughter, sister and wife. Thus, Marsh says that “It encapsulates the mechanisms, ideologies and social structures which have enabled men historically to gain and maintain their dominance and control over women.” (Marsh 95) Therefore, patriarchy presents the idea of male superiority and total control over women. Carolyn Holderread Heggen states IN her book *Reinventing Womanhood*:

The inherent logic of patriarchy says that if men have the right to power and control over women and children, they also have the right to enforce that control. . . . Domination and glorification of violence are characteristics of patriarchal societies. . . . In patriarchy, women and children are defined in relation to men who control the resources and the power. Women and children are the other, the object. Men

are the norm, the subject. In a dominance-and-submission social order, there is no true mutual care. Subordinates are to care for the needs of the dominants. (45)

Feminism is also critiquing the domestic violence that domestic violence is a consequence of patriarchy, and part of a systematic attempt to maintain male dominance in the home and in society. Gender discrimination in Indian society is one of the major causes of domestic violence in families. This violence creates such disturbances which make the obstacle to establish one's identity. Helen Cixous in her influential Book *Laugh of Medusa* says:

If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier which annihilates its specific energy and diminishes or stifles its very different sounds, it is time for her to dislocate this "within," to explore it, turn it around, and seize it; to make it hers, containing it, taking it in her own mouth, biting that tongue with her very own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of. And you'll see with what ease she will spring forth from that "within"-the "within" where once she so drowsily crouched-to overflow at the lips she will cover the foam. (887)

Therefore, Helen Cixous describes that a woman should not be defined within the discourse dominated and controlled by males. She explores that a woman should raise her own voice for their rights and their own world in which they can establish their identity. As Simon de Beauvoir explains that gender is a biological phenomenon but the cultural norms make one's sexual identity and discriminate them by their gender. As Beauvoir says that "Gender" is taken to refer to a culture based complex of norms, values, and behaviour that a particular culture assigns to one biological sex or another" (67). Where sex and gender are placed largely in the matrix of a culture's norms, values, and beliefs, "sexuality" is taken here as referring to a more individualised concept. Sexuality is used here to refer to the ways in which individual structures their sexual and gender performances, and the partners towards whom they direct their behaviour and emotional attachments (3). Carden Maren Lock describes in his book *The New*

Feminist Movement says, "The New Feminism is not about the elimination of difference between the sexes, nor even simply the achievement of equal opportunity, it concerns the individual's right to find out the kind of person he or she is and to strive to become that person" (38). In the above definitions about the female discrimination and causes of domestic violence contemporary critics have given their opinion their equality.

This chapter discusses the domestic violence extensively taking consideration of the selected texts. It deals with the characters in the novels which are being victims of domestic violence and suffering in their respective situation. This Chapter explains the enigma of domestic violence and its impact on females taking the consideration of the selected texts. This chapter also explores the condition of suffering women in their domestic space who belong to the Indian middle-class family and struggles to liberate them and seek their self-identity, independence in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg. Therefore, domestic violence makes women vulnerable in their particular situation which demeans their entity. Both the writers portray their characters such a way that they highlight their situation in which they are suffering. Both the writers are very prominent in their works by their works they extensively present the character's situation to find out their real suffering. As Shashi Deshpande projects the carrier oriented middle-class women and still they are suffering in their home, workplaces and on the other way around. In his article "Image of Women in Shashi Deshpande Novel *Roots and Shadows*; A Critical Study," Ramesh Kumar Gupta aptly remarks:

She explains the idea of detachment and liberation and tries to achieve them. She tries only to listen to the voice of her conscience and revolts. But unfortunately, she fails, culture and tradition, or fear of stigma, or timidity, or all these combined together. (43)

Ramesh Kumar is projecting the same situation that Shashi Deshpande explains the inner suffering of a woman in which she can't utter a word and the inner conflict of suffering women in society. As they project their characters in their novels.

Shashi Deshpande's first novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* which explores the gender-specific socialization that constructs the identity of the protagonist in the cultural context which suppresses her true feeling about herself. *The Dark Holds No Terror* introduced its characters as Saur, Jaya and Kalyani, Aru has been under the sexual, emotional psychological and economic violence. On the other hand, Mridula Garg also has the same way to precede their character in society. Mridula Garg has a different perspective on their goals and female autonomy. As, she has bluntly expressed female sexuality in her novel *Chittacobra*, suffering and exploitation of women in the *Country Of Goodbyes*, Man-woman relationship in the novel *A Touch of Sun*.

In Indian society, this ideology has been fixed that a woman cannot talk about her sexual instincts in which they remain in the emotional violence which can destroy her mental peace. She has the right to explore her feeling, emotions and her every instinct but the cultural ideologies restrict them to do so. Mridula Garg boldly portrays her character Manu in the novel who enjoys her sexual life. In the novel, the Protagonist is a married woman with two children but she is not satisfied and contented with her husband. In this way she is suffering due to her physical instincts, she can't explain to her husband and the relation in which she is suffering, is become a burden for her. Her characters as, Manu, Smita, Nameeta, Aseema, Marianne, Manisha all have been under physical violence, emotional violence, psychological violence. She also tries to connect across a chasm of loneliness and disappointment. To give favour to this point Susan E. Babbitt explains her point of view to the oppression of a woman in the different situation she says:

The effect of oppression may be such that people are psychologically damaged, possessing interests and desires that reflect their subservient status. They fail to recognise that society and institutions discriminate against them in deep ways and as a result, many of their perceptions and reactions are not fully representative of their own real needs and aspirations. (370)

In the patriarchal manifestation violence against women has been taking place due to the social relation powers in the society. It can be between men and

women, women and women and men and men. Domestic violence in the family is a prominent issue in India and all over the world. In the families, a father and a male dominate the female who oppresses them and deconstructs their identity. Anne Kiome describes the female and the discrimination between the sexes she says:

The term female is used interchangeably with the term girl and woman. I used the term female to refer to the psychobiological cultural reality whose initiated sex of assignment is based upon observation of biological factors that constitutes one to be female as opposed to male at birth. The term, therefore, includes the conglomerate of perceptions that renders one to be received and nurtured as an infant female, related to as a female girl, and integrated into adulthood with expectations of being a woman with specific social, cultural and religious contexts. The term is used to describe structural and perceptual differences between male and female. (4)

In the context of the *Dark Holds No Terror* Anne Kiome encapsulates the psychobiological reality of culture in which an identity forms on the bases of sexes. She defines how the cultural social and religious ideologies humiliate the females in the domestic space. Shashi Deshpande's first novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* which explores the gender-specific socialization which is the major cause of domestic violence which explores Saru's sufferings at her parent's home and after her marriage. Shashi Deshpande explains protagonist Saru's consciousness, suffering, sorrow, anxiety in which she was suffered in her childhood and in her married life as well.

The Dark Holds No Terror exposes the dilemma of a woman who strongly represents her identity and individuality. The protagonist Sarita still remembers her mother's bitter words that are "Why are still alive.....Why you die" (56). In this situation, she remembers her mother's words which makes her emotionally, and, psychologically weak. She thinks that her mother has not supported her in her childhood for being a girl child and after her marriage, her husband exploits her

throughout her life. At the beginning of the novel, she recollects the trauma of her life in her nightmare which she pronounces as:

At first, it was a nightmare of hands that brought me out of a cocoon of a blessed unreality..... I'm- dreaming – this – is not real Into the savage reality of a monstrous onslaught. And then nightmare was compounded of lips and teeth as well. Hands and teeth?No, hammers and pincers. I could taste blood on my lips. (11)

The *Dark Holds No Terror* explores past experiences of rape at the hands of the strangers who are none the other than her husband as she realises eventually. She is explaining here her nightmare in which she sees the hands that hurt her. At the beginning of the novel, she thinks that she has left her husband because of his sadistic tendencies. She has faced her husband's violence as she finds herself pinned under his body:

It was a monstrous invasion of my body. I tried to move, twisting my body wriggling under the weight that pinned it down. It was impossible. I was pinioned to a position of an abject surrender of myself. I began, in sheer helplessness, to make small whimpering sounds, piteous cries....I could not, I would not near it. I began to fight back, hopelessly, savagely. (10-11)

Her all suffering, fears and desires were struck in her unconsciousness which comes out in her dreams and which hurts her in a psychological way. Saru suffers from psychological violence in life from childhood to her married life. In her childhood, her mother discriminates her as she is a girl child and she is not good looking. Apart from that her childhood and her married life were also extensively disturbing as she says, "We come into this world alone and go out of it alone". (208). Thus, she is longing for the emotional security which she is lacking. As she was not considered as a lovely daughter and a successful wife. As her mother blamed her that:

You killed your brother. I didn't truly I didn't. It was an accident. I loved him, my little brother. I tried to save him. Truly I tried. But I couldn't. And I ran away. Yes, I couldn't. And I ran away. Yes, I admit

that. But I didn't kill him how do you know you didn't kill him? How do you know?. (146)

Thus, Saru's condition in the novel *Dark Holds No Terror* describes the mother-daughter relationship which is not established because her mother is possessive for her son and scolds her for being a girl. In this context, Graham-Bermann explains the situation of the mother in the family that mother's behaviour can change the behaviour of a child and he says:

Perhaps even if the mother is able to maintain adequate parenting, the changes in her affect and mood could have deleterious effects on her children's emotional well-being. For example, the child may worry more about the mother. (184)

In this way, Saru has an inferiority complex throughout her life. She suffers the emotional violence in her childhood as Mihalic and Elliot state:

During childhood and adolescence, observations of how parents and significant others behave in intimate relationships provide initial learning of behavioural alternatives which are 'appropriate' for these relationships. If the family of origin handled stresses and frustrations with anger and aggression, the child who has grown up in such an environment is at greater risk for exhibiting those same behaviours, witnessed or experienced, as an adult. (21)

Therefore, in the adolescence, a child needs proper attention and care from their parents. Childhood experiences lead them in their future aspects as well. The psychological violence on the children as Saru suffered throughout her life. According to Walker gender discrimination is also invites the intimate violence as he says: The socialisation process of assigning male and female sex-role behaviour is also seen as contributing to violence against women. It is suggested that battered women are rightly socialised into female sex-role stereotypes. (2)

Thus, she has always been in this guilt that she killed her brother as per her mother. Gender discrimination in the novel has also been the major form of psychological violence she experiences in her life. In this way, Carden describes the gender stereotypes and says "Gender-role stereotyping, women's oppressed

position in the family and workplace, the political significance of lesbianism and critiques of male violence in terms of power” (Carden 12). *The Dark Holds No Terror* describes the sexual violence that Saru has been the victim of sexual violence as she narrates her experiences with her husband. She opines:

The hands became a body. Thrusting itself upon me. The familiarity of the sensation suddenly broke the shell of silent terror that had enclosed me. I emerged into the familiar word of rejection. My rejection that had become so drearily routine. I struggled to utter the usual words of protest, to say... No, not now, stop it. But the words were strangled I my throat. The face I had never seen. A man I did not know. (11)

Saru the protagonist an educated middle-class woman and from her childhood she has gone through the discrimination, rejection, exploitation and she was emotionally insecure and her all disparities went her in the dilemma that where her individual entity. In this way, *The Dark Holds No Terror* describes Saru's sexual violence in the Indian middle-class family whereas she educated and carrier oriented women but the cultural ideologies and patriarchal phenomena make her situation vulnerable. As it is to say that If a female is educated and independent she has all the powers but this novel describes the psychological violence of Saru who has been inferior all her life. As she says that “He had been the young man and me his bride now I was the Lady Doctor and he was my husband. She says, “We’re on different planes and I try to choose the one he would like to be on.... It humiliates me” (70).

In the above quote, she opines that there is nothing between me and my husband. She wants to say that her relationship between him and I are the formal relationship which has no emotions, love, care. As she says that I have heard about the love marriages these are for only a few days because her husband always exploits her mentally physically emotionally. In this way, she wants to change the monotonous life and the role of a good daughter, honest wife and caring sister. Therefore, the domestic violence that she has been through becomes the major obstacle in instituting her identity. As she says:

She realises that as a woman she has a separate existence of her own: They came to her then, all those selves she had rejected so resolutely at first, and so passionately embraced later. The guilty sister, the undutiful daughter, the unloving wife persons spiked with guilt. Yes, she was all of them, she could not deny that now. She had to accept these selves to become whole again. But if she was all of them, they were not all of her. She was all these and much more. (220)

In the domestic violence patriarchal manifestation impose all the rules to exploit the other one. As she questions the patriarchal manifestation and is trying to find out her own answers. Now she thought:

who wrote that story? A man, of course. Telling all women for all time ... your duty to me comes first. And women, poor fools, believed him. So that even today, Madhab's mother considers it a punishment to be deprived of a chance to serve her husband. And yet ... if I could believe in that ... if I could put my duty to my husband above all else ?.(207)

In the patriarchal milieu, Shashi Deshpande explores one more ugly aspect which demeans female existence that is sexual violence. Sexual violence is a major paradox that makes women vulnerable. In Indian society, females are facing this problem such a way that makes them annoyed for everyone. In Indian society, females are going through sexual violence in the form of rape, marital rape, and child abuse. In this way taking the consideration of the text Saru faced emotional, psychological, sexual violence throughout her life. *The Dark Holds No Terror* she says that:

Yes, he loved me. Why then this fear, this trapped feeling? Clinically, rationality, I analysed my own feelings. It was not sex, not fear of sex. I was after all. I told myself, a medical student, knowing all there is to be known of male and female and what goes on between them. (39)

Saru explores the inner conflict through her sexual life and explains the married life with her husband. Saru explains her consciousness towards her future that has been trapped by her husband. Saru has struggled all facets of Domestic

violence. She says that being a medical student she is afraid of the sexual life with her husband. A husband considers her wife as a sex object and humiliates her without her consent. In the Indian society, a male relates his masculinity with the culturally constructed roles that a male is superior to a woman physically, mentally, economically, psychologically. Therefore, Indian society constructs the cultural roles for man and woman which decide their identity. In this way, prefixed cultural role also makes a man stronger which has become the cause of domestic violence.

Cultural Definition of Appropriate Sex Roles

Culture is distinctively constructed by the behaviour of a subject which establishes the ideologies to oppress the weak. Therefore Erik Erikson encapsulates the cultural impact on identity he says that: "A true identity depends on the support which the young individual receives from the collective sense of identity characterising the social groups significant to him: his class, his culture" (93). In this context, Mridula Garg's novel *Chittacobra* elucidates the reason for domestic violence that is the cultural definition of appropriate sex roles. *Chittacobra* projects the protagonist Manu's identity in the male-dominated society. She explains their married life as well as her identity crisis. In the traditional way of marriage, it put the question mark on that.

As *Chittacobra* is a well-accomplished novel of Mridula Garg which describes the woman's sexual instincts which make a woman stronger in her existence extensively. In the patriarchal milieu, a woman cannot talk about her sexuality. In male-dominated society, a male is free to talk about sexual things but if a female does the same it will be the insult of a community. As Mary Daly in her book *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*, points out:

The myth of the fall was to reinforce the problem of sexual oppression in society, so that woman's inferior place in the Universe became doubly justified. Not only did she have her origin in man, but she was also the cause of his downfall and all his miseries. (46)

As Manu describes her feelings with the priest Richard although she is married and describes her happiness and says, "I am dancing with him....I am not

just dancing...I am with him...I am in his Arms...I am flying in his arms" (32). She wants to enjoy her life with him and with this enjoyment she wants her identity too. In this way, she says, "I want my name. Although it will not have any existence still I want it. I want my power. I want the right to surrender. One independent name... today I got it. Mine or his? Richard ...Richard... Richard! (64)". She relates her identity with Richard in order to fulfil her desire. She wants her entity with Richard. Manu is very progressive towards her existence. In the novel, although a novelist expressed the pain of the protagonist her husband Mahesh is different from all the traditional way of living. According to Marsh, "sexual relations are seen not simply as a reflection of broader inequalities but a source of power which men exercise over women" (96). Her husband does not have any interest with her wife and remains busy with his work. Thus, she projects the cultural reality of the Indian society in which a woman can't express her desires related to her sexual things as she opines, "60 years old women can do whatever they want People don't say anything, age is just the physically growing thing, not of heart! After 30 years I will be like what I was 10 years ago". (83)

In Indian society, cultural manifestation dominates the female autonomy in which she can't take any decision for herself. In this context, Anne Kiome Gatbou opines her views on violence between the relationships she says:

Most female survivors of intimate violence in marital relationship carry themselves is particularly puzzling and is the subject of my inquisition into female identity formation. These survivors go about their daily lives optimally maintaining their experiences of constant violence. (qtd. in Gatobu 7)

Manu describes her point of view on their relationship as she says: "I have silently devoted to giving him everything that I feel a wife can give to her husband, a well-maintained house, neat and clean children and well dressed up wife" (88). So, all the traditional way of life Manu wants to liberate herself from all the taboos which make the obstacle on the path of her existence. Manu's quest for pride and her identity has crossed all the boundaries of traditional taboos. She feels comfortable and relaxed in the company of Pastor Richard. On the other hand, she is feeling exhausted by staying with her husband. Being in the relationship with her husband Mahesh still, she has a relationship with Priest Richard with whom she shares her every joy and sorrow. In the novel, she asserts her identity but she

wants to enjoy her freedom and she wants to live in her own terms. In this way, the females faced humiliation, suppression, but can't raise their voice. Mridula Garg's female characters are very progressive towards their autonomy. They acknowledged their inner self and revolt against the social taboos which make them inferior.

Values that give rights to men over women and girls

In the novel *Country of Goodbyes*, Mridula Garg projects Smita as a very strong persona. She has been discriminated right from her childhood days. She loves the wood rose which was her childhood memory which haunts her psychologically throughout her life. Her brother in law raped her and exploits her very badly. She has to beg her brother in law for her fee that was her biggest helplessness. After that, she went to America where a psychiatrist Jim Jarvis exploits her mentally physically and economically. She has to abort her child because of him. Therefore, she says another rape which was on her identity. She is throwing her heart out in front of Marianne and says:

Another rape. First on my identity, now on my baby. My cry reverberated through the hospital. It had been imprisoned inside my body ever since my girlhood rape, with my body, bound and my mouth gagged. After that, I had sealed my lips. Balled my fists and held all the terrible cries rising within me. Saving my energy for revenge. Revenge! Like a gunshot, that word resounded in my brain.
(48)

Smita's Brother in law raped her in a dark room and he forced her to see in the mirror. In the night she struggled desperately all night but was unable to loosen her bonds. She still can't decide what was terrifying – the bright lights, the tall mirror in front of her, or the helplessness of being tied up. She faced sexual violence in the family which deny the fact that a girl is safe in the four walls of the home. In spite of all the trouble, she has to suffer throughout her family. Her husband exploits her which makes her situation vulnerable.

According to Brown Miller, the act of rape lies at the origins of men's oppression of women. As Barbra Mehrhof and Pamela in their article understanding "Rape- Myths, Facts and Realities "that Rape is considered a political crime, a terrorist act that keeps women subordinate. It is an effective political act of oppression exercised by members of a powerful class on members of the powerless class (80). Feminism asks for sexual equality that includes sexual difference. Smita describing her experience being a woman and she says:

First, those whom we called abused women. Humiliated, beaten, raped and defeated. Their assailants could be or their own husbands, lovers, monsters or fathers. These women had a tremendous capacity for pain, had become accustomed to bearing it over long periods. The thought of being removed from pain and domination was much harder to bear than the beating itself. They had become their own abusers. (45)

The protagonist Smita describes her situation and explaining the situation of all-female who is being a victim of domestic violence. Smita revolts against the social structure of Indian society that why females are not taking initiative for them. In Indian society, most of women are not aware of their rights. As Smita says that women are their own abuser. As Namita's sister scolds her for going to the police and she says:

If you go to the police you will only end up ruining your reputation. You're all alone; they'll also try and exploit you. No, that's not the thing to do. Listen to me," Namita moved closer. Smita pulled herself away but Namita caught hold of her. Listen to me. Take whatever house money I have and leave for Baroda. I will say that the money was stolen along with the gold chain and the ring. (16)

Mridula Garg describes the situation of two sisters one is raped by her brother in law and second restricts her to go to the police station for the family honour. As Beauvoir says that woman's lot cannot be ignored, "She shuts behind her the doors of her new home. When she was a girl, the whole countryside was her homeland: the forests were hers. Now she is confined to a restricted space. . ." (Beauvoir 23). In this way, Simon de Beauvoir describes traditional ideologies

which construct the inferiority complex in a woman. On the name of security what they have given them the restricted space which made their area to do something for them. In this way, they exploited physically, psychologically, emotionally.

Expectations of Roles within the Relationship

That Long Silence is an expression of the modern Indian housewife and depicts the inner expectations of a partner in the relationship and her quest for identity in the relationship. The silence between the protagonist and her husband further deteriorates the situation. Towards the end of the novel, she realises that she should break the silence and try to achieve her identity as an individual through self-realisation and self-assertion. Her husband cannot understand her feelings as a result of which she decides to move on. This whole story revolves around Jaya's quest for identity. She describes her relationship with her husband and describes the situation, "In fact had never spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was erased each time after it happened; it never existed in the word". (95)

Jaya project the silence which demeans her psychologically. She describes her relationship which is only physical as she further says: "My need was now less: I could stay apart from him without a tinge. I could sleep with him too, without desire" (97). In the Indian society, women are married off to the strangers and they don't often are not compatible in their conjugal relationship. Jaya comes face to face with this situation and suffers between her self-respect and her body. Bound in the traditional role of wife, she has become an asexual being. The anger and frustration are simmering beneath the surface of acquiescence and acceptance and she says that "I could time it, almost to the second, the whole process of our lovemaking, from the first devious wooing to the moment he turned away from offering me he hunched"(85). In this way, she is a victim of domestic violence in the form of psychological violence and sexual violence.

Thus, patriarchy makes female silent in the family and she can't say anything for herself, as doing so might result in brutal violence against him in the same way as Jaya describes her silence in the novel *That Long Silence*.

Domestic violence is taking place in the form of emotional violence in the life of Jaya. After her marriage, she has to change her name from Jaya to Suhasini. She is known by a name and therefore an identity that has been altered due to the cultural norms. She exclaims why her father gave her the name Jaya and says, that my father gave me this name and says, "I named you Jaya," he said, "Jaya for victory" (15). After her marriage, she describes her situation and helplessness as she says: "And I was Jaya. But I had been Suhasini as well. I can see her now, the Suhasini who was distinct from Jaya, a soft smiling, placid, motherly woman.... A woman who coped." (16)

Therefore she explains her situation and questions her identity that who she really is? Jaya or Suhasini? It reflects her consciousness which is trying to discover her true identity. She is thinking that she should get her own identity from Suhasini (shy) to Jaya (Victory). Shashi Deshpande presents the patriarchal manifestation in the novel as Jaya's husband explains his rules to Jaya. She silently suffers and her husband harasses her in every way. He says, "My mother never raised her voice against my father however badly he behaved to her, " he had said to me once" (83). *Long silence* creates a magic spell for the readers. *That Long Silence* depicts the plight of an educated Indian woman of our time. Jaya feels to be individualistic only in the presence of Kamat as she says, "With this man I had not been a woman. I had been just myself – Jaya. There had been ease in our relationship I had never known in any other. There had been nothing I could not say to him. And he too . . ." (153). In this novel, she also describes her married life. Her husband Mohan is very harsh with her and she always feels insecurity and she describes her emotional and sexual instincts with Kamat.

Thus she says that she is failed in her married life because of her husband as she says:

I'll tell you what's wrong. I've failed him. He expected something from me, from his wife, and I've failed him. All these years I thought I was Mohan's wife; now he tells me I was never that, not really. What am I going to do? What shall I do if he doesn't come back? Mukta, I was so confident, so sure of myself, I felt so superior to others . . .

Kusum, yes, and you too . . . and now, without Mohan, I'm . . . I don't know what I am. (185)

In the Indian society, women are dependent on their husband and they find their identity with them as Jaya is describing although she finds complete herself with the Kama. In the same context Simon de Beauvoir says:

The Second Sex, this social construct of the 'eternal feminine' has confined women to a socially, culturally and -- ---- economically inferior status. Men always --establish norms, and women are defined as the "other" with reference to these norms- He is the subject, he is the Absolute she is the Other. (14)

Domestic Violence is a major problem in society. Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg reveal their deep insight into the plight of Indian women, who feel oppressed by the domestic violence. These novels delineate the women characters in the light of their hopes, fears, aspirations and frustrations which have created by the different types of violence. Their situation highlights women's different types of violence and their inferior position and their suffering in a male-dominated society.

Women protagonists are victims of the prevalent gross gender discrimination, first as a daughter and later as wives. They are conscious of the social inequality and injustice towards them and struggle against the oppressive and unequal nature of the social norms and rules that limit their capabilities. These novels are the depiction of the anguish and the conflict of the modern educated middle-class women who are losing their identity by facing violence which makes them mentally sick. There is an honest portrayal of their fears, sufferings, disappointments and frustrations. Besides revealing the woman's struggle to secure self-respect and self-identity, the authors describe the multiple levels of oppression sexual violence, emotional violence, verbal violence, economic violence. These conditions highlight the consequences and circumstances and explore the psyche of middle-class women within their marriages, workplaces and in their family life.

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Chapter 5

Manifesting Psychoanalytical Plight of women: Representation from the selected texts

Psychoanalysis is a set of concepts and theories which throw light on our hidden desires, fears and other emotions which get repressed or unsatisfied. These repressed desires manifest themselves in the form of mental illness. Therefore, this chapter reveals the psychological plight of women in a patriarchal society. Women have always stayed silent and been mute spectators, since ages, in the patriarchal milieu. As Carol Gilligan describes in her book *Wild Voices: Fiction Feminism and Perennial Flowering of Truth* she says that: "Voice is part of the political world, and its psychological power comes from the fact that it transposes what has no physical manifestation the psyche, the truth, the soul, ourselves"(78). In this way, the patriarchal ideologies and male dominance demean their existence to come in the forefront. After this, in the domestic sphere, the patriarchal society, cultural, religious discourses impose the influences on their psyche.

Psychoanalysis theory helps us to know about the hidden desire and the reason for their conscious. Nancy Chodorow describes the theory of Psychology as she opines that, "Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorder by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind."(96). Psychoanalysis is the most influential theory to study the psychological structure of an individual. The word Psychology comes from the Greek word "Psyche" meaning life "logos" meaning explanation. Psychological theory is about to analysis the experiences, desire, conscious and unconscious of a person. In his definition of 'psychological criticism', M.H. Abrams goes further to establish the link between the author and the subject matter, " Psychological criticism deals with a work of literature primarily as an expression, in fictional form, of the state of mind and the structure of personality of the individual author"(263). Carl Jung gives a description of the psychoanalysis as:

Psychoanalysis is the name given to the method developed for reaching down into the hidden depths of the individual to bring to light the underlying motives and determinants of his symptoms and attitudes, and to reveal the unconscious tendencies which lie behind

actions and reactions and which influence the development and determine the relations of life itself. (4)

Psychoanalysis is a very wide area and it has many sub-theories to follow as Farrel describes that, "Psychoanalysis is considered to be a High –level of consciousness, Physic structure of personality, psychosexual development, "defence mechanism and theory of instincts and it serves to unify them to some extent" (21). Therefore, psychoanalysis investigates mental disorder, fears, conflicts, and dream interpretation. Thus, psychoanalysis has many theories which explain the human mind their dream interpretation, conscious, unconsciousness and analyse the psychology of an individual. As Peter Barry explains that:

Psychoanalytic criticism is a form of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature. Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind. (96)

Freud writes in his Essay "Psychoanalysis":

It was a triumph for the interpretative art of psychoanalysis when it succeeded in demonstrating that certain common mental acts of normal people, for which no one had hitherto attempted to put forward a psychological explanation, were to be regarded in the same light as the symptoms of neurotics: that is to say they had a meaning, which was unknown to the subject but which could easily be discovered by analytic means....A class of material was brought to light which is calculated better than any other to stimulate a belief in the existence of unconscious mental acts even in people to whom the hypothesis of something at once mental and unconscious seems strange and even absurd. (235–236)

Freud distinguishes the three parts of the Psychic structure of the human mind. According to Freud id is the most influential for our behaviour. Its instincts are inherent. It has not a consciousness for rational and moral awareness. It

comes in our psyche by birth and it contains sexual and aggressive impulses and works without any hesitation. The Id freely and randomly follows instinctive urges without any consciousness of rational, moral or censorious awareness. Freud says:

Id contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution- above all, therefore, the instincts, which originate from the somatic organisation and which find a first physical expression here in forms unknown to us .(169)

Thus, id is the most primitive and highly motivated for seeking sexual instincts. Sigmund Freud describes the wholeness of the psyche structure as he describes the ego is the realistic agency which modifies the id because ego comes with the reasoning and which emerges in the society. He opines, “Whereas the Id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, the ego is governed by the reality principle” (130). It also comprises the three levels of awareness as, conscious, precocious and unconscious. As this chapter is dealing with these levels of the psyche. As Freud explains that:

The majority of conscious processes are conscious only for a short time; very soon they become latent, but can easily become conscious again....in the condition of latency they are still something psychical. We call the unconscious which is only latent, and thus easily become conscious, the ‘preconscious’ and retain the term ‘unconscious’ for the other. (102-103)

The pre-conscious mind consists of the past psychic experiences and desires which are readily recallable and is the storehouse for the conscious mind. Preconscious mind involves the memories; dreams, thinking and that can easily be thought. It also can make a person think which is no happened. The unconscious is the storehouse of those painful experiences and emotions, fears, guilty desires, and unresolved conflicts we do not want to know about because we feel we will be overwhelmed by them. The unconscious comes into being when an individual is going through the repression. Until we find a way to know and acknowledge to ourselves the true causes of our repressed wounds, fears, guilty desires, and

unresolved conflicts, we hang onto them in disguised, distorted, and self-defeating ways. Therefore, Charu Sheel Singh in his book *Theory of Literature* says:

The Id is the influence of heredity, the superego the influence, essentially of what is taken from other people- whereas the ego is principally determined by the individual's own experience that is 28 by accidental and contemporary events. To this three-tiered division of the psyche, Freud associates three psychical qualities the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious. (Singh 170)

Psychoanalysis has many wide areas with the theories. This chapter manifests the women's condition which explores their psyche e.g their hidden desires, thinking level, consciousness and their trauma's which are all together shadowing her quest for construction of her unique identity. Michael Ryan describes in his book *Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction* feminism as :

Concerned with how women's lives have changed throughout history, and it asks what about women's experience either as a result of an essential ontological or psychological difference or as a result of historical imprinting and social construction. (Ryan 101)

To analyse the women's experiences, dreams, repress desires this chapter discusses consciousness and unconsciousness of the protagonists in the selected novels. Jacques Lacan encapsulates his views about the female in the psychoanalysis theory in his book *A Feminist Introduction* by Elizabeth Grosz, "Women's fascination with psychoanalysis has enabled psychoanalysis to provide an explanation of women's social and psychical positions within patriarchal cultures" (7).

Lacan opines that psychoanalysis describes the situation of females in patriarchal society. In the social structure, women humiliate themselves in their silence and patriarchal ideologies take advantage of it. In this way, females invite more trouble by being silent. Psychoanalytic feminism, however, used Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytical theory as a tool to resist the patriarchal ideology of gender and in part, it is radical as it also put the fight for women's rights. As describes the nature of feminism in the *Psychoanalytical Criticism* Grosz says:

Psychoanalytic inquiries into the nature of female identity, libido, sexuality, and development are of major significance to feminism. In spite of whatever problems it may exhibit, psychoanalysis is still by far the most complex, well developed, and uses psychological theory at hand. It retains an "honesty" or at least an openness about its attitude to women and femininity that is rarely visible in and yet is highly symptomatic of a more general patriarchal, cultural framework. (8)

Therefore, Grosz explains the psychoanalytical nature of female identity and its aspects which are related to the cultural manifestation. As Arigay describes in her work *Sex Which Is Not One* "If she says something, it is not, it is already no longer identify with what she means. What she says is never identical with anything, moreover; rather, it is contiguous" (29). In this way, the critics explain their views on feminism in the psychoanalytical theory. Ritu Tyagi in her article "Identity and its Representation in Western and Postcolonial Feminism" voices her views on its historical origins and development of the thoughts of critics, "Feminism and postcolonial feminism makes share the mutual goal of challenging forms of oppression but they also share tense relations with each other. Both bodies of thought have concerned themselves with the study of marginalised other within repressive structures domination" (45). According to Elaine Showalter:

It was through the women's liberation movement that we began to draw connections between our own work and our own lives, to note the disparities between the identifications and ambitions that had attracted us, along with thousands of other women, to the study and teaching of literature, and the limit and secondary roles granted to fictional heroines, women writers or female scholars. Feminism spoke to our lives and our literary experience with the fierce urgency of a revelation or a great awakening. (Showalter5)

Contemporary critics have given their views on psychoanalysis feminism which is trying to manifest women's circumstances to enlighten their inferiority, discrimination, silence. This chapter only focuses on the psychological condition of females in the patriarchal ideology. It throws light on the critical issues such as, rape, female identity, gender discourses, female psyche, gender discourses that

how female psyche gets affected by these issues and the effects of these issues. As the previous chapters explain the subjugation and assertion of female identity, socialisation of sex and gender, domestic violence which explains all the issues that demeaning female identity and effects the mental level of a female. In this way, the focus of this chapter is to analyse selected texts and the issues which disturb the character's psyche. Both Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg explore the psychological experiences of their characters. Their characters reveal the psychological aspects of gender discrimination, sexual desire, alienation, male dominance, unconscious, male chauvinism which affect their mental peace. Characters in the selected novels suffering silently and their hidden desires make them venerable.

Therefore, this chapter explores their inner conflicts and their unconscious level in their respective conditions. Both the writes are profoundly projecting their characters in the novels which describe the substances which makes their psyche vulnerable. Psychoanalysis explores the deep insight into the condition of suffering women who are repress their desires, marital disharmony, sexuality, loneliness and the mental level of them. Psychoanalysis finds causes of silence, exploitation, and humiliation. The term psychoanalysis has three distinct meanings. Firstly it is a school of psychology, which emphasises psychic determinism and dynamics. As a school of psychology, also emphasises the importance of childhood experiences in molding one's adult personality and behaviour. Secondly, psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the role of the unconscious in determining human behaviour, is a specialised method for investigating the unconscious mental activities. Finally, psychoanalysis is a therapeutic method for the investigation and treatment of mental disorders, especially neurotic disorders (179). Warren Thomas Farrell an eminent American author describes in *The Standing of Psychoanalysis*:

Psychoanalysis is considered to be a High-Level theory containing various sub-theories such as 'levels of consciousness', 'psychic structure of personality', 'psychosexual development', 'defence mechanisms' and 'theory of instincts', and it serves to unify them to some extent. (21)

The unconscious is the storehouse of those painful experiences and emotions, fears, guilty desires, and unresolved conflicts which are repressed by

domination, violence, exploitation and silence. Until we find a way to know and acknowledge to ourselves the true cause of our repressed wounds, fears, guilty desires, and unresolved conflicts, we hang onto them in disguised, distorted, and self-defeating ways. When a woman lost her autonomous she feels traumatic experiences which come by repress desires it will become the mental trauma for her. In this way, Neign Heidarizadeh a professor in Islamic Azad University describes his views in his article entitled "The Significant Role of Trauma in Literature and Psychoanalysis that:

Moreover, psychoanalysis trauma engages serious long-term negative consequences. Essentially, past trauma and traumatic memories affect the mind of the characters. Confusion and insecurity cause trauma; typical causes of psychoanalysis trauma are sexual abuse, employment discrimination, police brutality, bullying, domestic violence, and particularly childhood experiences. (789)

The term 'trauma' originates from the Greek trauma ("wound"). This term can be interpreted in the context of both physical and psychic wounding. In this chapter, trauma makes women vulnerable by their suffering, atrocities, silence and in the relationship. However, the boundaries between events and their effects often overlap, and physical trauma that leaves a lasting psychological impact also qualifies in the context dealt with. In this context, the novel *Country of Goodbyes* Mridula Garg defines the subconscious level of Samita as she says, "After a tortuous of unravelling, he concluded that he dreads of full-length mirrors emanated from a subconscious memory of her great fear when she heard the story of Dracula as a child" (28). As she dreadfully raped by her brother in law which haunts her throughout her life which became the mental trauma for her. Thus, Jaya in the novel *That Long Silence* describes her trauma for losing her true self-keeping distance from herself:

I had seen in the mirror the day of our wedding a woman who had not seemed to be me, who had taken the burden of wifehood off me. A Humourless, obsessive person. But Mohan's eyes as he spoke of her, were agonised the eyes of a man who had lost a dear one. Suhasini was dead, yes that was it, she was the one Mohan was

mourning, she'd walked into the sea at last. No, the fact was that I'd done it. I'd killed her. (12)

That Long Silence explores Jaya's trauma for losing and seeking her identity. Her husband changes her name after the marriage, in order to maintain her autonomy she establishes her identity at the end of the novel. Thus, she says that Suhashini was dead and Jaya gets rebirth in the male-dominated society. In the dilemma of knowing 'who I am,' she kept silent herself throughout the novel. The symbol of the mirror defines the plight of Smita which is present the substances of their mental trauma. Smita's brother in law raped her and left her naked in the room which was full of mirrors. Smita defines her situation and says, "I was not able to see her in the mirrors." (56)

In this way whenever she sees mirror she always gets scared of the mirror. She sees the traumatic incident of her life where she sees her face. On the other hand, the novel *That Long Silence* also presents Jaya's point of view on the day of her marriage. She says that on the day of her marriage she saw the different face in the mirror. She describes that the mirror is reflecting the different face which is not me. Both the writers Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg present the trauma of characters which they faced traumatic experiences by being silent. In this context M. Rajeshwar in *The Trauma of a Housewife: A Psychological Study of Shashi Deshpande's That Long Silence* says:

With a gift for sharp psychological insight into the subtleties of human mind and society and aided by a richly evocative, unassuming and unpretentious style, Shashi Deshpande is perhaps ideally suited to tread the labyrinthine tracts of the human psyche and creditably represent it in fiction. Her five novels are an experience in the psyche of people who lose their capacity for rational thought on being subjected to traumatic experiences. (41)

A.K. Awasthi in "The Quest for Identity in the Novels of Shashi Deshpande" says that "The title of *The Dark Holds No Terror* is self-explanatory. The irony involved is far from being abstract. Darkness implies incapability to see things clearly and objectively. Darkness is a source of constant fear from the outside. It

affects the outlook of the inside, but it holds no terror in itself" (101). In this way Saru describes her trauma by being silent she says:

But what had really shaken me that day had been the distaste I'd seen on Mohan's face when I'd got into a temper. He had looked at me as if my emotions had made me ugly, as if I'd got bloated with them. Later, when I knew him better, I realised that to him anger made a woman unwomanly. (56)

As Simon de Beauvoir says:

Psychoanalysis vehemently rejects this notion of choice in the name of determinism and the collective unconscious, this conscious would provide with the readymade imagery and universal symbolism, it would explain analogies found in dreams, lapses, delusions, allegories, and destinies to speak of freedom would be to reject the possibility of explaining these disturbing concordances. (80-81)

As Shashi Deshpande reveals the social taboos which describe female humiliation for her biological difference from a male. If a woman is having a menstrual cycle is not a shame for her. As *Roots and Shadows*, Indu's Kiki gives the description a woman that "You are a woman now.... You can have babies and don't forgetfor four days now you are unclean. You can't touch anyone on anything" (79). As Simon de Beauvoir describes the biological differences of a male and female which makes the shame by the woman she-she says:

Some essential biological givens are not part of her living situation, the structure of the ovum is not reflected in it. Nature does not define woman it is she who defines herself by reclaiming nature for herself in her affectivity. (73)

Therefore, Saru describes her body structure she thinks that being female she has done any crime she says:

If I had been a skinny child, I had become an over plump adolescent. I can still see myself as I was when I entered the medical college. Too plump, those hideous skirts that hesitated midway between the

knees and my lumpy calves. Two pigtales on two sides of a round face. A religiously straight center parting. (63)

So, she explains her consciousness for being a female and her structure she says:

My breasts which had caused me agonies of self-consciousness earlier, making me feel everyone was staring at them so that I longed to wear some kind of armor that would hide them from the world... now they became something to be proud of. I learnt how to dress, to accept the curve of my lips, the slimness of my waist. To take in male stares and admiration, with outward equanimity and secret pride.(63)

Therefore both the writers explore fears, desires, isolation, trauma and anxieties which exist in the consciousness of the characters in a subtle way. In the Indian middle-class families brought up their girl child that manner in which they are taught for their sexuality as if they have committed any crime by taking birth as female. So, in the adolescence girls feel shame and inferiority and affect their psyche. Both writers vehemently explain these issues in their novels. The protagonists of Mridula Garg and Shashi Deshpande in their selected novels they reflect their psychological plight in their situation. Shashi Deshpande's novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* explores gender discrimination, an unwanted girl child, marital rape, fears dreams, memories of Saru. *That Long Silence* explores the silence, isolation, demeaning identity, marriage disharmony of an independent woman Jaya. *A Matter Time* comes with the myths, female identity, and unsuccessful married life of Kalyani.

Mridula Garg also expresses her views very vehemently on the social taboos. In her selected novels she boldly projects the sexual instincts, patriarchal ideology, man-woman relationships. Her most prominent novel *Chittacobra* reveals the protagonist's Manu psychological plight for her relationship with another man except her husband. *Country of Goodbyes* describes the experiences of Samita who has been raped by her brother in law. *A Touch of Sun* explores the isolation, silence, asserting identity in alienation. Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg explain the same psychological plight of women in their novels. *The Dark Holds No Terror* explores the discourses which examine the protagonist Saru's

substances to demean her identity from her childhood till her married life. Saru's psychological plight has been vulnerable she experienced the effects of gender discrimination, an unwanted girl child, sexual harassment, childhood memories which haunts her dreams in her subconscious. She says:

As a child my fantasies, my dreams, had no relevance to the fact that I was a girl. The fact had not meant to me then what it would later. But as I grew up, they became the dreams of a total female. I was all female and dreamt of being the adored and chosen of a superior, superhuman male. (53)

In this statement, she describes her dreams and fantasies which has no relevance because her parents discriminate her because she is a girl child. In order to fulfil her dreams she consciously wants to be a man notwithstanding she is female but she wants the adoration and privilege that belongs to a man in the male-dominated society. Erich Fromm writes in his book *The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy tales and Myths*:

This true dream, which is the expression of our hidden desires, Freud calls the "latent dream." The distorted version of the dream as we remember it is the "manifest dream" and the process of distortion and disguise is the "dream-work." The main mechanisms through which the dream-work translates the latent into the manifest dream are condensation, displacement and secondary elaboration. By condensation, Freud refers to the fact that the manifest dream is much shorter than the latent dream. It leaves out a number of elements of the latent dream, combines fragments of various elements, and condenses them into one new element in the manifest dream. . . . By displacement, Freud refers to the fact that an element of the latent dream, and often a very important one, is expressed by a remote element in the manifest dream and usually one which appears to be quite unimportant. (69–70)

As Erik Erikson states in his book *Female Identity Formation and Response of Violence*, "The self-images cultivated during all the childhood stages thus gradually prepare the sense of identity beginning with the earliest mutual

recognition of and another face" (qtd in Gatabu 6). Erik Erikson opines her views on the formation of identity in the childhood stages because inferiority and superiority complexes are cultivated in childhood. As Saru's mother tells her daughter that you are not so fair and ugly and Saru recalls her mother's words and consciously talks with her inner self she says, "I was an ugly girl. At least, my mother told me so. I can remember her eyeing me dispassionately, saying - you will never be good looking. You are too dark for that (61)."

The Dark Holds No Terror brings out the struggle of a woman in a family where a male child is preferred to a female child and novel reveals how the insensitive attitude of the family towards a female can drive her into a schizophrenic state of mind in which a person confused between the real world and imagination. The central character of the novel is Saru who experiences indifference of her mother towards her. Saru was blamed for her brother Dhruva's death. She is always neglected. She remembers her mother's harsh words still bothered her, "Why didn't you die? Why are you alive and then died? (67)." In this statement, Saru bears the harsh words of her mother and she feels guilt throughout her life that she has killed her brother. In the context of guilt, fear and conscious Freud says that:

An interpretation of the normal, conscious sense of guilt presents no difficulties; it is based on the tension between the ego and the ego-ideal and is the expression of a condemnation of the ego by its critical agency. The feelings of inferiority so well known in neurotics are presumably not far removed from it. In two very familiar maladies, the sense of guilt is over-strongly conscious; in them, the ego-ideal displays particular severity and often rages against the ego in a cruel fashion. The attitude of the ego-ideal in these two conditions, obsessional neurosis and melancholia, present, alongside this similarity, differences that are no less significant. (50)

Freud explains the feeling of inferiority as Saru feels in her guilt. She remains in the trauma of killing her brother Dhruva and the harsh words of her mother. The prominent regret of Saru is being a girl. Kate Millet projects her views against the concept of penis envy as she says that "girls envy not the penis but

only what the penis gives one social pretension to (181).” Saru’s describes the fear of losing the love and affection of her husband. In order to make these things combine with her, she has a fear in her subconscious which comes out in this situation.

Saru explains the ideology of male-dominated society which brings out the myths and cultural influences in her life. From the beginning to the end of this novel Saru faces discrimination by her sex. As her mother throws irony by saying to Saru about her birth. She says, “I was born. But of my birth, my mother had said to me once.... It rained heavily the day you were born, it was terrible. And somehow, it seemed to me that it was my birth that was terrible for her, not the rains (169).” Thus Freud explains that:

It is the stress in Freudian theory on the initial bisexuality of the child and the precarious psychic rather than biological nature of gender identity which has encouraged many feminists to attempt to psychoanalysis for their interests. . . . In Freud, the femininity or masculinity which a person achieves through his or her psycho-sexual development stands for culturally and historically specific forms of gender identity. (45-50)

In the context of Gender identity, *Dark Holds No Terror* describes Saru’s guilt conscious which makes her humiliate throughout her journey. It makes her think, “My brother died because I heedlessly turned my back on him. My mother died alone because I deserted her. My husband is a failure because I destroyed his manhood (217).” Her psyche gets affected by the discrimination in her childhood and sexual harassment and the unwanted girl child. In this context Carol R Hartman an American Author has written the following about dissociation in abused children:

Children who have been emotionally neglected or physically, psychologically or sexually abused often dissociate from their feelings and from the memory of their abusive experiences to cope with the traumatic experiences. The abused child learns quickly that the expression of anger towards the abusers (frequently the parents) only results in more abuse. Accordingly, the child dissociates the

anger and trauma that means the ego splits in such a way that the feelings of pain, guilt, fear, confusion, powerlessness and so on are separated from the thinking self in order to survive the traumatic experiences. (56)

This novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* throws light on the gender discrimination of serious nature exercised by mother towards her own daughter. She remains denied of parental love and becomes a victim of her husband's ill-treatment. In the end, Saru, at father's house objectively mulls over the reasons for her disastrous marriage. She blames herself for it. In guilt consciousness, she ruminates. In this way Lucy Irigaray draws attention on the male superiority she says:

How can we accept the idea that woman's entire sexual development is governed by her lack of and thus by her longing the male organ? Does this remain that women's sexual evolution can never be characterised with reference to the female sex itself?. (69)

As Lucy Irigaray argues on longing the male organ. A woman has her own powers in which she can achieve what she wants. She should not relate herself to the male. As in the novel the protagonist, Saru feels guilty herself being a girl child. In this way, Shashi Deshpande projects the character's psyche of the child, a daughter and a wife which is constructed in the Indian society which comes with the cultural influences, traditional role and male dominance. Therefore, Pramila Paul describes her view on this novel she says:

The Dark Holds No Terror by Shashi Deshpande is a totally different novel in the sense that it explodes the myth of man's unquestionable superiority and the myth of woman being a martyr and a paragon of all virtues. It is based on the problems faced by a career woman is a refreshingly new phenomenon in Indian English fiction. (30)

Shashi Deshpande explores woman's fears, dreams and consciousness about her autonomous. As it is said in Jacques Lacan, *A Feminist Introduction* by Elizabeth Grosz, "Women's fascination with psychoanalysis has enabled psychoanalysis to provide an explanation of women's social and psychical

positions within patriarchal cultures" (7). In this way, Psychoanalysis examines female's hidden desires and their mental illness, inferiority and their conscious level towards their identity and their psychology for the construction of identity formation.

Psychosexuality

Mridula Garg explores a woman's sexuality and passion. In the novel, *Chittacobra*, Mridula Garg explores the passion and sexual instincts of a woman. So far in society as well as in literature the male gaze and the focus on the female body from a man's eye have been dominant. But feminist writers bring to the fore the sexuality of women and express it as something natural and acceptable. Manu the protagonist in the novel is overwhelmed at the beauty of Richard, "I saw that he was not white but bronze.... His eyes were not brown but green— grape green. No, not green really. Perhaps they were brown (13)." The beauty of a man is described from a woman's perspective, "a green radiance spurted out of the brown of his eyes . . . I had always believed his wavy mop of hair to be auburn. Actually, it was bronze too. Like the sandy beach of the sea glinting under the midday sun" (14). In this context, Virginia Woolf describes that "There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind (76)." As Helen Cixous describes women's sexuality as her strength she says:

the decensored relation of woman to her sexuality, to her womanly being, giving her access to her native strength; it will give her back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal; it will tear her away from the super ego's structure in which she has always occupied the place reserved for the guilt :-tear her away by means of this research, this job of analysis and illumination, this emancipation of the marvellous text of herself that she must urgently learn to speak. (880)

Thus, Helen Cixous describes the relation of a woman to her sexual instincts that she should always speak up for herself. In the male-dominated society, the sexual powers and sexual instincts always belong to the male gaze. As Rosalind Coward refers to the report in Sunday Times, "Liberating the libido. Getting sex straight was an essential first step along the noisy road to liberation; writing about it could be the next leap forward" (29). As Rosalind describes the

term libido that means the sexual powers should not related to males. As she says that writing about sex would be the next leap forward for a woman as Mridula Garg did the same when she wrote this novel. Therefore Helene Cixous says in *Sexual Politics*:

Almost everything is yet to be written by women about femininity: about their sexuality, that is, its infinite and mobile complexity; about their eroticization, sudden tum-one of a certain miniscule-immense area of their bodies; not about destiny, but about the adventure of such and such a drive, about trips, crossings, trudges, abrupt and gradual awakenings, discoveries of a zone at one time timorous and soon to be forthright. (342)

The protagonist of the novel *Chittacobra*, Manu explains her married life with Mahesh. She says that she was prepared for the married life with Mahesh and I have given her all the things what a wife can give to her husband. As Manu says, "I had quietly committed myself to give him all that I believed an average husband wanted from his wife. A well-appointed house....An attractive, attentive and properly groomed wife.A hospitable hostess attuned to the needs of our social circle" (78). Notwithstanding all the things she is happy with her husband is if she is not taking the care and emotional bonding with her husband as Betty Friedan puts it in *The Second Stage*:

In the first stage, our aim was full participation, power and voice in the mainstream. But we were diverted from our dream. And in our reaction against the feminine mystique, which defined women solely in terms of their relation to men as wives, mothers and homemakers, we sometimes seemed to fall into a feminist mystique which denied that core of women's personhood that is fulfilled through love, nurture, home". (27)

Therefore, Simon de Behaviour opines her idea that a woman, "is not concerned to establish individual relations with a chosen mate but to carry on the feminine functions in their generality; she is to have sex pleasure only in a specified form and not individualized" (435). In *Chittacobra*, Mridula Garg explores the innermost self and desires of a woman who is a passionate lover, a detached

wife and mother, a poet and a rebel who challenges societal hegemony and jealously guards her individuality. In this context, the patriarchal society set rules for man and woman. A man thinks that a woman is a commodity and a sex object for this marriage gives them a certificate for doing this.

These ideologies set by the society which psychologically they grasp substances. As Manu realizes, "I knew when we got married that it was nothing more than a marriage of convenience for Mahesh. All the love was from my side. I had never asked him if he loves me because I was afraid he might say no" (78). The lack of communication and companionship often leads to the failure of a marriage. In order to conform to the social standards and stereotyped image of a married woman, women suppress their needs and their real selves. Manu is like an actress performing a role without any life in it. She says:

For eight years I had not looked at myself or Mahesh for that matter, with my own eyes. Whichever town we went to big or small, my vision was determined by what the average man thought to be the average view of society. Even when I looked at myself in the mirror, I saw not my face but the image of the average woman acceptable to society. That was the role I played through the day but..." (78)

In a dialogue between Mahesh and Manu, Mahesh derides the concept of romantic love and says that society will find it difficult to function if all husbands and wives were madly in love with each other. Mahesh rejects the emotional needs of Manu as sheer sentimentalism. Manu replies to this, "Our society is so mature. It has found a foolproof safeguard. Arranged marriage" (82). In this way, Mahesh himself explains the Indian society mindset which men apply in their married life that a relationship between man and a woman can never be romantic after the marriages. Therefore, Manu is lacking emotional bonding with her husband. In this way, she wants desires for her sexual instincts. As Segal gives his views on sexual freedom. He says:

The desire for sexual freedom, to be active sexually outside of marriage, and a desire for more satisfactory heterosexual relationships were important reasons many women came to the

women's liberation movement in the early 1970s. Sex and relationships with men were the focus of intense discussion. (117)

Thereby, Segal describes explains the freedom of sexual instincts outside the marriage. The sexual freedom gives emancipation to every woman but conventional ideologies make her to think that she has no right over sexual pleasure. Simon de Beauvoir gives comment on the male chauvinistic ideology and she says: "Woman has "no right to any sexual pleasure activity apart from marriage; sexual intercourse thus becoming an institution, desire and gratification are subordinated to the interest of society for both the sexes" (435). The protagonist Manu revolts against this silent hegemony, "I wanted my name. Even if no value was attached to it, I wanted it. I wanted my freedom. I had to have control over my right to surrender"(55-56). She feels complete with Richard and finds her identity. After falling in love with Richard Manu cherishes her individuality for the first time. According to Freud, "The motive force of female fantasies are unsatisfied wishes... a correction of unsatisfied reality" (qtd. in Waugh 168). Her self-esteem is raised and she feels a sense of fulfilment on seeing her name written on her books, "My publisher was right. Once my novel was published, my name became known to the people" (134). In Helen Cixous' opinion, feminine writing is a way of giving voice to repressed female sexuality and the female libido. She opines:

By writing herself, a woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display-the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time. Write to yourself. Your body must be heard. Only then will the immense resources of the unconscious spring forth. Our naphtha will spread, throughout the world, without dollars-black or gold-non assessed values that will change the rules of the old game. (250)

Helen Cixous's interpretation of the woman writing is giving voice to the voiceless. This can change the monotonous of the male-dominated society which

has been set that a woman cannot do what a man does. In this way, the protagonist wants her identity with her beloved Richard with her upcoming novels. So, in the Indian society people set the ideologies and prepare them for their roles. Wherein, they set their psyche to perform their decided roles. Protagonist Manu rejects all the barriers which have been constructed in society. Therefore, a woman has every right to express her sexual desires, her dreams and independence.

Silence

That Long Silence begins with the thought of Elizabeth Robinson a speech to the WWSL, 1907, says that, "If I were a man and cared to know the world I lived in, I almost think it would make me a shade uneasy the weight of that long silence of one half of the world. In this statement, she explains the silence of one half of the world." (4) She describes the patriarchal society humiliates the weaker sex in a way that they remain silent in a male-dominated society. Shashi Deshpande encapsulates the silence of the Indian middle-class independent women. Indira Bhatt in *That Long Silence: A Study* observes:

Shashi Deshpande in her novel *That Long Silence* on one level presents the condition of the woman in Indian society—her role-model and how the different types of women act out their roles with their silence. The title emphasizes the silence that the protagonist Jaya wishes to break and to search her own self, her wife-role and her real individual self. At another level, she examines the role of Sita and Gandhari and Maitreyee, at still another level, it is the modern convent-educated English-speaking woman who gropes into the darkness of life—the dissatisfaction with her role-model in marriage and her agony over her own acceptance, though unconsciously, of the two standards for man and woman in society—the two-language formula of the Sanskrit drama. Sanskrit for the man and Prakrit for the woman. (156)

Indira Bhatt describes silence and hidden desire of a protagonist Jaya. As the narrator of the novel Jaya describes her true self she says in the beginning: "Perhaps it is wrong to write from the inside. Perhaps what I have to do is see myself, us from a distance. This has happened to me before; there have been

times when I've had this queer sensation of being attached and distant from my own self" (67). Jaya describes her silence and experience which haunts her throughout her life. She analyses her silence which distant her from existence. Although she is independent still she lacks her autonomy. On the contrary Jaya wonders and writes:

He saw strength in the woman sitting silently in front of the fire but I saw despair. I saw despair so great that it would not voice itself. I saw a struggle so bitter that silence was the only weapon. Silence and surrender. (36)

Jaya defines her married life which is quite silent and she sarcastically makes her silence her weapon wherein her silence kills her silently. As she further describes:

In fact, we had never spoken of sex at all. It had been as if the experience was erased each time after it happened; it never existed in words. The only words between us had been his question. Did I hurt you?' and my answer, No' Each time, after it was over, the same question; No'. Each time, after it was over, the same question; and my reply too, invariably the same- 'No'. (95)

Jaya describes her married life which her silence is the voice of her trauma. As she says we did not talk about sex. That is why Ram Sharma in "Writing from the Margins: A Study of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*" comments:

The metaphor of silence under which the novel is organized helps to impose a quietude and discipline, the inner dynamics of a self-cut off from human communication That Long Silence' is not an intrusion into the world of silence but a silent communion with the oppressed self-straining for articulation, for a voice, Jaya and Mohan hardly spoke to each other of love and sex. Love-making for them was a silent and inarticulate affair. (92)

The protagonist Jaya in *That Long Silence* describes her silence and hidden desires which are repressed in her silence. While narrating her life incident she describing the monotonous of India society in which things getting shape in order to fulfil the traditional way of society women have to remain silent and keep

their desires unspoken. As Virginia Wolf gives the description of a female in the male-dominated society and says:

A very queer, composite being thus emerges. Imaginatively she is of the highest importance; practically she is completely insignificant. She provides poetry from cover to cover: she is all but absent from history. She dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact, she was the slave of any boy whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life, she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband. (41)

Virginia Wolf encapsulating the greatness of women in her book *A Room of One's Own*. She gives them an act of courage for their endeavour. The Indian society set these myths, tradition and rules for female. Therefore, Jaya says:

I must not laugh, I must not laugh.....even in the midst of rising hysteria, a warning bell sounded loud and clear. I had to control myself, I had to cork in this laughter. But it was too late. I could not hold it in any longer. Laughter burst out of me, spilt over, and Mohan stared at me in horror as I rocked helplessly. When finally I recovered myself I was alone in the room. Silence flowed into it. I wiped my face and tried to realise what I'd done. (122)

Sandra Bartky's an American author in her book *Femininity and Domination* explanation of this phenomenon is:

"Female self-awareness in the situation I describe is importantly constituted by a certain contradiction between appearance and reality: on the one hand, the presumption of equality on the part of all actors in this drama, on the other hand, its actual though covert and unacknowledged absence. An ambiguous situation, affirming women in some ways and diminishing them in others tends to produce in women a confused and divided consciousness. (94)

Sandra Bartky an eminent American author gives her views in her book *Femininity and Domination* on the awareness of females and her divided consciousness. In the case of Jaya, she is a writer she writes poetry which based on her biography but her husband rejects her decision to publish her work. As she presents Mohan's rejection on this she says:

Mohan's face had finally silenced my babble. Jaya he had said dully, how could you, how could you have done it?... all those people who read this and know us, they will know that these two persons are us, they will think I am this kind of a man, they will I am this man. How can I look anyone in the face again? And you, how could you write these things, how could you write such ugly things, how will you face people after this? (144)

The whole situation presents male chauvinism which restricts her to present her point of view. Mohan thinks that that people will analyse their relationship on the basis of her writings. In Indian society, a woman has to endure herself by maintaining the honour of their families which make eradicates her mental piece. As Lucy Irigaray rightly claims that- "It is important for us to guard and keep our own bodies and at the same time make them emerge from the silence and subjugation" (421). Thus, Psychoanalysis critiques mental structure which examines the conscious and unconsciousness of an individual being. Wherein, Jaya remembers her incidents that are full of silence and repressed desires which have become the silent trauma for her. Jaya in *That long Silence* and Smita in *Country of Goodbyes* explores her silence consciousness with the same consciousness. As Smita:

He had thought that by marrying her he would unravel every skein of her consciousness with his analytical powers. She would articulate everything, uncover every secret which made up her essential self. Not just her body but her heart, memory conscious and subconscious selves would satiate himself on them. He wanted a rare and fantastic orgasm from her. But her silence defeated him again and again. In his failure, he turned violent. (41)

Both the novels present the same consciousness which exists in Indian society. As Simone de Beauvoir says of 'woman' defining herself on account of her own position in a male-dominated society," Woman can be defined by her consciousness of her own femininity no more satisfactorily that by saying that she is a female, for she acquires this consciousness under circumstances dependent upon the society of which she is a member" (80). Females get conscious of their marriage, relationships, dreams and their autonomous. As in the novel *Country of Goodbyes* in the begging of her introduction Aseema defines her name's importance which is not worth it for her. She describes the male chauvinistic ideology which is affecting woman's psychology and she says:

My name is Aseema. What! I can hear you explain, Aseema is no name for a girl. Without limits- Who's even though I suppose that's what male chauvinism is all about. Girls have to remain within limits while boys are free to cross them. So it was that my pipsqueak of a brother was named Aseema by my parents and I was plain, old-fashioned Seema. Limited Within boundaries or fetters or whatever. I changed it and made it Aseema, without so much as a by your leave. (142)

That Long Silence and *Country of Goodbyes* explore the hidden desire for her identity which has been lost by their names. Jaya's name was changed with Suhasini and Aseema's name changed with Seema. Both characters present the same consciousness. As Freud introduced the threefold theory of Psychoanalysis in which he explains the levels of consciousness. As he opines: Freud explains,

The majority of conscious processes are conscious only for a short time; very soon they become latent, but can easily become conscious again....in the condition of latency they are still something psychical. We call the unconscious which is only latent, and thus easily become conscious, the 'preconscious' and retain the term unconscious for the other. (102-103)

Freud explains the level of consciousness. As the selected texts have presented their conscious level in their particular situation. He describes that conscious is only for a short time when it comes to the reality it takes the form of

the unconscious because of the circumstance in which a subject forget her existence. As Urmi in the *Binding Vine* the protagonist known for her psychological fear and often mental conflicts too. The experience of love and trust has made her sure of herself than most people. However, her love for Kishore and her marriage to him, however, have made a difference. This fear may be the result of her repressed feelings. Urmi says:

But somewhere on the way, I seem to have lost that confidence. Now there is fear – the fear of Kishore never returning home, lost in the seas somewhere as one of his friends was; the fear of Kishore turning away from me, a distant look on his face; the fear of his not wanting to come back to me. Yes, that's the thing, that's what I am most afraid of. (82)

Simon de Beauvoir explains a woman's existence in man's life. A man also longs for a woman, "but she will never be more than an element in his life: she does not sum up his destiny. But the girl, since childhood and whether she intends to stay within or go beyond the bounds of femininity, has looked to the male for fulfilment and escape ... "(328). In order to maintain the decorum of this society, a man uses a woman his life. Consciously or unconsciously she defines herself. Freud deviated much from this standpoint and postulated the role of unconscious mental activities in interconnecting the isolated conscious psychic activities. The conscious contents, Freud observes, are isolated acts and are to be interconnected with psychic activities, which are not conscious or observable, for a fuller explanation of psychic phenomena. So, according to Freud, in psychoanalytic theory, "the mental processes are essentially unconscious, and those which are conscious are merely isolated acts and part of the whole psychic entity" (16).

Feminist Consciousness provides a new awareness of the woman's role in the modern complex world. The concept of feminism incorporates a broad spectrum of ideas and possesses an international scope. In a patriarchal society, a woman is considered inferior to man. Gradually, as a result of consciousness-raising efforts, women have become aware of the limits and dangers of femininity. Increasing consciousness of their oppressed situation has given rise to the

woman's struggle against male dominance, against the strictures passed by the renowned man. If she can understand her past and the working of her culture, she can break away from externally imposed gender restriction. She needs the courage to seize all the opportunities. On the consciousness of the identity Judith Butler arguing on a postmodern feminist she says:

The nonliterary use of psychoanalysis, however, as a psychological explanatory model for the acquisition and consolidation of gender identification and, hence, identity generally fails to take account of itself as a narrative. Subject to the feminist aim to delimit and define shared femininity, these narratives attempt to construct a coherent female subject. As a result, psychoanalysis, as feminist met a theory, reproduces that false coherence in the form of a storyline about infantile development where it ought to investigate genealogically the exclusionary practices which condition that particular narrative of identity formation. (332)

Butler examines the use of psychoanalysis is useful in gender identification, gender identity, female identity, isolation, and the role of postmodern feminism to critique issues. Thereby, critics use psychoanalysis to examine the gender identity that has been constructed in society. Psychoanalysis finds the inferiority and desires for a coherent subject. Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg present psychological plight of the female characters taking the consideration of the selected texts. Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg contribute towards the reconstruction of the feminine and female sexuality in terms of their disruptive, subversive or creative potentials. Their project can be called 'feminist' since it works to enable women to rise above the repression of their femininity and to take charge, and become agents, of their own subjectivity. Female characters in the selected novels eradicate their desires, dreams, and relationships by being silent. Psychoanalysis offers an extensively psychical understanding of sexual differences between body and identities. Psychoanalysis helps to explain the perpetuation of masculine power and enables feminist theorist to articulate possible corrections and challenges.

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Conclusion

Female identity is a very complicated concept in the contemporary era. In addition to that, it becomes more complicated when discussed in reference to gender socialisation, violence, and exploitation. Identity is the convergence between self and subjectivity. Therefore, a subject comprises his/her individuality with the surrounding as he/ she thinks "Who I am", and what the society and culture perceive that who is he or she, on the basis of her prescribed roles. Patriarchal ideologies construct their performances according to their gender as Judith Butler explains the theory of "performativity". Hence a subject is longing for her entity with the conjuncture of tradition and modernity. The socio-cultural scenario has always been demeaning the entity of females. In Indian society, culture, tradition, patriarchal ideologies always have been an obstacle for establishing female autonomy.

Although, in the postmodern world females have attained their autonomy to some extent but they are struggling for their identity which has been lost in their unconsciousness, silence, loneliness. An independent middle-class woman repressed her desires by performing the roles of a daughter, wife, and mother. After dealing with complications regarding the female identity in contemporary conditions where patriarchal influences are still hovering over the female heads, patriarchal ideology provides them all the requirements in order to maintain the decorum in the society. In the patriarchal ideology, females are struggling for establishing her individual entity. Female identity is a form of development to explore the concept of sense in the patriarchal arena. Patriarchy has established the iniquitous relations between gender and politics which have become the major cause for demeaning female identity.

Females are struggling by their birth to identify themselves in the society. As in Indian society, families prefer a male child rather than a girl child. Her sex makes her a woman by her gender socialisation on the concerned cultural context. Cultural ideologies construct their identities on the basis of their prescribed roles by the patriarchal ideology. In the socio-cultural scenario, a female has to adopt the existing cultural norms to survive in society. Females are enough educated and independent but they are still struggling for their individual identity. The motive

of this work is to evaluate the condition of females and their hidden dreams, desires and their psychological plight with the reference to the selected texts. The title of this thesis suggests to explore the female identity and conscripting the voices of Indian middle-class women who are unvoiced in their various circumstances. Thereby, the selected texts have been chosen for this research work. Both the writers project their characters' plights which are presenting the vision of Indian middle-class women in the male-dominated society.

Albeit, the contemporary writes are critiquing the unspoken voices to explore their exploitation in various domains. First-wave feminism writers Marry Ellman's in her work *Thinking About Women* protests against classifying and the stigmatising role and particularly those which relate to the reproductive function of the woman. Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* and Simon de Beauvoir in *Sexual Politics* pointed out how females are socialised to be women on the basis of their sex. Sylvia Plath Julia Kristeva explains the stream of consciousness as the foremost element in of their stories. In the second wave, Elaine Showalter pioneered gynocriticism in her book *A Literature of Her Own* (1977). She explores three aspects about women writing, the female writers and their place in literary history, consideration of the treatment of female characters in the books of both male and female writers and exploitation of a canon of literature written by women. Therefore, gynocriticism seeks to appropriate a female literary tradition. The postmodern feminists Nancy Chodorow and Anne Kiome Gatobu manifest the female identity and their own world in the patriarchal society. Thus, in the Indian literature in the consideration of Indian society, writers such as Jasbir Jain penned down their views on voiceless and marginalised identities and after an articulation for the marginalised identities.

This research work comprises two prominent writes Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg who have a distinct observation to look up the substances which are related to the female assertion in the society. The existential struggle gets reflected both in the novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg. Shashi Deshpande expresses resentment at the injustice found in a lot of women. She deals with various subjects including gender discrimination, marital rape, the problem of spinsterhood, dissatisfaction in sex, the contradiction between the husband and wife, the quest for identity, alienation and boredom of housewives

etc. Shashi Deshpande's novels *That Long Silence* wherein, the protagonist Jaya describes the journey of her silence, Saru describes her fear, terror, consciousness, self in the novel *Dark Holds No Terror and A Matter of Time* exposes protagonist's sufferings, wait and struggle with time.

Similarly, Mridula Garg is very unconventional as portrayed in her writings. Mridula Garg's selected novels i.e *A Touch of Sun*, her first novel, describes the loneliness of the protagonist and explores a man-woman relationship. Her most acclaimed novel *Chittacobra* portrays various forms of a woman in the postmodern world and portrays presents man-woman relationship, love, marriage and sex. Her third novel *Country of Goodbyes* critiques the exploitation of woman and her self-awareness in the male-dominated society. Therefore, both the writes are geographically different but are same in their point of view towards woman empowerment and their individuality. These novels have been selected Indian woman which is different from being subjugated in the society. The fives chapters in the thesis describe themes i.e. patriarchy, cultural and social construction, gender inequality, domestic violence, and the psychological plight of a woman in the Indian society and disparities which are demeaning female identity.

This research work is an attempt at understanding the emerging trends of feminism and the exploitation of women in patriarchal society. The first chapter deals with the thematic understanding of female identity and postulates the elements which are helping to understand female identity i.e. cultural construction of female identity, self, subjectivity, gender inequality, culture, social construction, patriarchy. The first chapter discusses in detail the emerging trends of feminism. Feminism is an extension of existentialism deals with various issues like gender discrimination, female identity, inequality, violence, etc. This existentialism struggle is for the establishment of one's identity and to assert one's individuality. It is a desperate fight to continue existing as a separate individual.

The second chapter critiques various aspects in which the protagonists subjugate and assert their identity with reference to the selected novels to analyse the nature of feminism. This chapter is all about the description of females who are subjugated and assert their identities. Protagonists in the novels struggle with gender subjugation, patriarchal ascendancy, tradition and modernity, Man-woman relationship and marital rape. Feminism helps to understand the patriarchal ideology in which these issues have been constructed and enlighten them to avail

their opportunity. The selected novels portray the characters who suffer in their situation. This chapter helps to understand the particular situation of women in the patriarchal society and their assertion and subjugation in the male-dominated society. Novels describe women's efficiency and cultural impact which demean them. Women characters are lurking between tradition and modernity. Thus, they get humiliated with a situation that is 'to do or not to do'. In this situation, they want to empower their self but the patriarchal ideologies subjugate them.

To understand the perspective of suppressed women, their exploitation in patriarchal structure the third chapter examines the socialisation of sex and gender. Females are suppressed by their gender discrimination and they get inferiority complex. This chapter reveals some aspects which are letting women down in the society i.e socio-cultural aspects, myths, cultural norms, tradition, norms which are culturally constructed. The socialisation of sex constructs the social roles for females on the basis of these issues. Sex is the determination of biological differences but social norms construct different roles for boys and girls. This chapter helps to understand the condition of suppressed women and their exploitation on the basis of sex/ gender in the patriarchal structure with the feministic perspective. This chapter emphasises culturally constructed roles for every individual.

Therefore, a woman should not be judged on the basis of her sex which makes them inferior. The woman is biologically different from a man but she is not weaker sex. This ideology should be changed. Some myths are related to the menstruation cycle which brings shame for a female should be neglected for the betterment of woman empowerment. Education helps in these disputes to overcome such ideologies. Females should have right over her inner instincts she can have her every right to exercise in her marital status. Mridula Garg conscripts the marital plight of protagonist Manu in the novel *Chittacobra*. In the male-dominated society, she projects protagonist Manu's sexual instincts boldly. This chapter helps to understand gender discrimination, sexuality, inferiority complex, consciousness for biological structure in the male-dominated society.

The patriarchal influences are very much prominent in the societal arena. In Indian society, men show their masculinity to dominate woman. Hence, the fourth chapter discloses the identity crisis by domestic violence against women and their struggle for the establishment and reconstruction of their identity through given

texts. Domestic violence is not physical alone. It has many ways to humiliate woman as control, physical abuse, sexual abuse, marital rape, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, economic abuse, and male privilege. Therefore this chapter discussed domestic violence through selected novels. This chapter describes the causes and effects of domestic violence on female identity in detail which help to understand the struggle and their identity crisis.

The mindset of the people in the society is culturally construed with the female that she is a burden over a family, commodity, and preferences of gender which make the causes of domestic violence. This type of violence can be prohibited by stopping male dominance and avoiding culturally constructed roles. It can be possible when the traditional and imposed culture implications will vanish. Domestic violence put the vulnerable impact on women by these aspects and they get affected in their situation as the fifth chapter deals with the psychological plight of a woman which reveals their problem, pain of a suppressed woman in a psychological way. As Saru discriminated by her gender discrimination and marital rape in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* which make her schizophrenic patient as she describes that 'the hands are still haunting me'.

Mridula Garg describes the situation of raped woman Smita that she is not able to come out from her situation. Saru and Smita become mentally sick by their situation and they remain silent throughout her life. This chapter examines silence and alienation of the protagonists in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg. They have a deep insight into the female psyche. Focusing on the marital relation both the writers expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her subservient role in the family. Their novels reveal the man-made patriarchal traditions and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman. Shashi Deshpande uses this point of view of present social reality as it is experienced by women. Her young protagonist's rebel against the traditional way of life and its patriarchal values.

Education helps to empower the females for their better future. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists are educated middle-class women still they trapped in tradition and modernity. Although they struggle with their situation but they use their creativity as protagonist Jaya penned down her experiences and writes a novel to express herself which help her to explore her identity. As she explains that now I am not only Mohan's wife I am a writer too which gave her

independence. Elaine Showalter describes in *A literature of their own* that women writing will give them sway to grow from subordinate culture and Helen Cixous says that woman should write for herself. It can change the female conduct in patriarchal tyranny. Therefore, women's writing has been changing its scenario from marginality to self-assertion. Simon de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Marywollstone Craft, Virginia Wolf and Helen Cixous have tried to change the aura of female subordination by their writings.

Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg have camouflaged writing style which presents the hidden silence of women. Shashi Deshpande is born and brought up in the southwestern region of India and Mridula Garg born and bought up in the eastern part of India. Shashi Deshpande uses the storytelling method to make her fiction impressive. She makes the reader psychologically active to understand her novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* which is about the Protagonist's gender discrimination, childhood experience, marital rape and extramarital affair which give a description of women's psyche. In this novel, she used the first person to third person narrative technique. Interior monologue is also her narrative technique in her novels which is used in her novel *That Long Silence* that is about the suppression, subjugation, despair, recollection of the protagonist Jaya which exhibit thoughts passing through the minds of protagonist's past and present experiences. Shashi Deshpande's introspection makes her writing style more authentic for the reader. The symbols which she used in the novels that are the mirror for seeing the different faces of lives, bullocks for a man-woman relationship, dreams for hidden desires, hurting hands for marital rape, which describe characters loneliness, man-woman relationship, childhood experiences, and desires.

Shashi Deshpande's selected novels have a thematic meaning which presents the title of her novels. For example, her first novel *The Dark Holds No Terror* she describes the darkness of Saru's childhood experiences which holds terror throughout her life. Shashi Deshpande's novels project the first person narrative in present and third-person narrative in past experiences to reflect the flashback in her novels i.e *The Dark Holds No Terror* presents Saru's past experience. Her storytelling way makes things in a realistic approach. Her diction is complementing the Marathi culture in which she completed her graduation she articulates words as, Kaka, Kaki, Ayi, Ajji, Atya.

In the writings of Mridula Garg, the audacity of her themes makes her writing style very bold. Her novels and short stories have been translated into many languages. Mridula Garg's most prominent theme in her writings is cerebral reflection during sexual intercourse. Her novels reflect the memory of past novels which is highly significant in her writing style. Her novels are full of emotions, reactions, reasoning, vengeance, rebellion, dreams of the subconscious. Mridula Garg presents the series of female characters who seek new experiences in the world with her sexual instincts. She also applies the stream of consciousness to analyse the continuous emotions, reaction and feelings of the characters as Smita a protagonist in the novel *Country of Goodbyes* continuously feeling humiliation and recalling her past experiences and want to get revenge of her exploitation. Mridula Garg displays the themes in her novels i.e mirror to analyse the different forms of identity, a symbol of sex to free from all bondage, Sun is for the equal right for man and woman. Thereby, she explains her symbols and themes to demand equality between man and woman.

Chittacobra a very controversial novel of Mridula Garg which means different shades of one aspect, on this perspective Mridula Garg explains protagonist Manu's distinctive instincts what she has been looking for. The title of Mridula Garg's novel *Country of Goodbyes* describes the bad experiences of protagonist Smita while living in India. She does not want to remember that time of her exploitation that describes the novel *Country of Goodbyes*. Her third novel *A Touch of Sun* also has a theme in its title that protagonist Manisha suffers from silence and alienation in her married life. She wants the light of her part as the many suffered women want. This research work applies intertextuality in the selected texts for the differences and similarities of their themes and writing style.

In the writing style of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg, there are similarities and differences as well in the fiction saga. Shashi Deshpande's writing style is very mysterious and there are hidden meanings in the story which are very interesting to analyse. Therefore, characters are systematically organised to play their characters. The female characters of Shashi Deshpande are middle class educated women who are independent but they are not consciously clear towards their independence. So, they are longing for their freedom in the patriarchal world which creates a dilemma that they should achieve their goals or not. Shashi

Deshpande describes their female characters are not so strong because they are not being able to raise their voice for their rights.

Mridula Garg's writing style is quite different from Shashi Deshpande as Mridula Garg's female characters are very rebellious and strong for their emancipation. The prominent difference between them is that Mridula Garg's characters are exploring their identity by achieving their freedom to get sexual relations in the selected novels. Shashi Deshpande's characters are concerned about their identity to break the traditional ideology in the male-dominated society. Shashi Deshpande's characters are in extramarital affairs but they are not free from the bondage of society but Mridula Garg's characters are fearless in love. Her novels describe the mentality of women in the changing sphere of life. Instead of all these dissimilarities, one aspect is the same that they raise their voice for the female emancipation in their different perspectives.

This research work is significant because a full-length study on the comparison of Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg has not been undertaken so far in the context of feminism. Even, very few research has been piloted on Mridula Garg in the English language. This is the foremost comparative work on the selected authors as Shashi Deshpande is a writer of Indian English and Mridula Garg is a Hindi Writer. Both the authors are comprehensive for the empowerment of female identity. The research work comprehended with the spectrum of comparative literature. The present research is also significant because it assists us to understand the problems and sufferings of females. It would empathies us with the situation of suffered women. It represents silences and subordination of women and their struggle to gain an identity in the patriarchal paradigms.

This thesis is showing the way to the psychological discourses in the changing scenario. It represents the silence and subordination of women across different culture and different environment and their unconsciousness in the patriarchal mind set. Along with exploring female identity Shashi Deshpande and Mridula Garg make an effort for social change to explore the substances of the weaker sex. Thereby, they tried to make awareness among people the establishment of female identity by a series of female characters through their fictional work. In the comparative work on the selected writers, it would be

beneficial for further research also. The research that has been undertaken for this thesis has lightened a number of issues on which further research would be beneficial there are numerous aspects which are open to discuss female identity, gender discrimination, domestic violence, consciousness.

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