

### **A Reading of Shashi Deshpande's Novel Small Remedies**

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#### **Abstract:**

Shashi Deshpande *Small Remedies* portrays her middle-class female protagonists finds difficult in male dominant society. It also cherishes her search for love, meaning and happiness in life, a search for something to hold on in the curious world she has perforce to live. Shashi Deshpande evoke up a woman inspiration of life which convey in the novel partly through the awareness of other female characters. Woman pines for love and understanding in married life. Shashi Deshpande writes about the problems of women and their search for identity. Her characters are careful and thoughtful creatures. They try to know what they are and overcome from the problems created by men and society. They fight against the gender intolerance and attempt to find an Primary principles for the identities of masculinity and femininity. The Articles deal with the pain and wound faced by women from Shashi Deshpande's *Small Remedies*.

**Keywords:** gender discriminations, masculinity, self-identity, society, femininity.

#### **Introduction**

Shashi Deshpande is one of the most powerful novelists in the modern Indian English. She makes a novel attempt to trace the position of women in the 21st century. Her novels related to the middle-class family with special attention of their sexual, cultural, traditional and sensitive roles. Her protagonists are financial independent focuses on women struggles in their life, they search for self- identity. Deshpande novels are related to women issues related to the inner life of women facing in society and family.

Her *Small Remedies* is a self-embarrassed novel. It about sex, love, domestic feeling, courage, honesty, truth, trust, husband and wife. The novel is about the experience of experienced women, neither in happy journey nor in a sad journey. Madhu is the protagonists of the novel. She is a motherless child. She grew up with her father. At a young age she loses her father too. She always wants her mother's love and affection. She has idealized it through pictures.

The novel *Small Remedies* speaks about the Remedies that the women's character opt for the care and longevity of their children. The character Madhu suffers from the mother- complex of overgrowth. Madhu relieve process from her inner wounds starts when she is challenged with the two lives of liberated women who follows the call of their souls to achieve complexities as individual and pay the process it mean.

One is Savitribai Indorekar the successful singer, the woman who has revolt, the mother who has been refused by her own daughter, the aging matriarch who rules over her kingdom of music. The one is Leela, Madhu aunt, a political activists who knock down the ordinary of widowhood and dares to marry a Christian widower having children. In *Small Remedies* Deshpande pictures strong characters of women. The female protagonists move from feminine consciousness to the self- affirmation. Madhu, Savitribai and Leela are the 3 ambitious and brave women, writing, music and politics are the Abandoned in their career.

Deshpande disclose the understanding of women soul particularly educated, middle- class women ambitious for self- affirmation and independence. In *Small Remedies*, the cultural ethos is of the tradition Brahmin community Pune in the late 19th century and during the early 20th century. The novel deals with the courage and intolerance of Savitribai Indorekar, an eminent vocalist.

Savitribai has referred to gender discriminations when she says that takes a long way for a woman to reach the topmost position, and how difficult it is for the woman to break through the fence that comes in her way. Madhu, the protagonists in biography record about Savitribai felt when her grandmother asked to stop singing right away during her performance at a family gathering. Like her father and father-in-law she had led a most unusual life and paid price for being a woman.

Madhu infer that is the best way for women to survive to conceal their grief and live as if we're a miracle of miracles. She tries to compromise with the death of her son Aditya for death is as certain as birth in the cycle of human existence. There may be complete and big Remedies to bring a woman out of her oppressive alive.

Leela is Madhu's aunt is courageous, financial independent Communist who works for women's welfare and run by her own rules after her husband death she married to doctor Joe. She financial supported her husband family after his death. A close study of her novel announce that Deshpande is a highly thoughtful writer who is clearly aware of the male- female variations in society.

Her male characters obey to the standard feminist description of a middle-class husband who is very carefull, egoistic and sometimes over-ambitious. At the same time most of her women characters suffer from some weakness. In general way the term feminism means struggles to support and maintain the stand one's ground for equal rights for women with men. Feminism stands for not only a awareness of woman's difficulty but also strength of mind to change the conditions.

Shashi Deshpande writes *Small Remedies* at a time when similar attempt may be witnessed in Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, Vikram Seth's *An Equal Music*. Madhu has been commissioned by a Publishing House to write a biography of a famous classical singer Savitribai Indorekar. Deshpande Mai concern is not the Hindustani classical singer but the gross gender discriminations prevailing not only in society but the field of classical music as well.

In *Small Remedies* Shashi Deshpande makes an honest and novel to attempt to trace the position of women in the 21st century. The female protagonists move from feminine consciousness to the self- affirmation. In the present paper focus is on the struggle, hardships, subject to male ego faced by the women protagonists of the novel who are taking themselves from self- realizations. Music for Savitribai writing biography of Bai for Madhu selfless service to TB patients for Leela and getting free from household responsibilities of middle-class house wife for Munni are the Small Remedies that makes loss in life bearable.

Deshpande has considerable success in portraying woman as protagonist in plots centered round issues such as female marginalization, marital discord, sexual suppression, alienation and the search for self. For centuries Indian traditions, social norms, cultures and customs have been leading men to feel that they are superior and different and forcing women to think that they are inferior human beings who are not expected to play any role other than the traditional ones of each being a wife to her husband, mother to her children and a caretaker of the house.

Novelists like Shashi Deshpande and Githa Hariharan together represent the half century since 1947 and the changing concerns of feminist thought. Shashi Deshpande in her novel *Small Remedies* subverts the traditional image of

domineering and demanding husbands by portraying Lata's husband Hari and enjoys cooking and household chores instead of depending on his wife and Leela's husband Joe who encourages her clinic for TB patients.

Indian Women desire to have intellectual and spiritual companionship with their male counterpart which should culminate in their total surrender of minds and bodies for each other woman realizes that the only way to relate her male counterpart is by offering body and mind to him unconditionally. She becomes puppet in hands of her husband.

In *Small Remedies*, Shashi Deshpande portrays a strong character of women. This novel presents the changing role of women who do not believe in inferior status of woman in the family as well as in society. The main characters of this novel Madhu, Savitribai, Munni and Leela along with their feminine qualities exercise their courage, intellectual energy and ambitions. They boost their moral and emotional strength to withstand in this male dominated society. They are aware of the injustices heaped upon them, they display a determination to face the challenges of life boldly.

Deshpande, through her novel *Small Remedies*, projects the self- confident of Indian Indian woman in a Hostile Patriarchal society. She makes honesty an important toll in the assertion self and project Savitribai and Munni has failures due to their life achieve them success in their quest. All the women, in this novel have sensed this demand of the situation and becomes successful. They go against society but within the limits. In *Small Remedies*, Shashi Deshpande delineate the major women characters in the sub version of their traditional roles. Bai, Madhu and Leela are the victims of the gross gender discriminations but their self- realization helps them in discovering their identity and self. They went on with the dying desire towards their achievement facing the hardships while life threw upon them. They never looked back .They have their own dreams and they Lear how to realize those Dreams despite social barriers. They suffer a lot in their desires for the "unfeminine" rights to freedom. Women, thought talented gifted with courage, are sideliners as they are women. This novel represents the arrangements of a life story within a life story. This novel reveals that Shashi Deshpande a highly sensitive writer who is clearly aware of the male-female imbalance in society. Her male characters conform to the standard feminist description of a middle-class husband, who is insensitive, egoistic and sometimes over ambitious. In a general way the term feminism means struggles to support and maintain the insisting for equal rights for women with men. Shashi Deshpande once asserts "most of my writing comes out of my own intense and long suppressed feelings

about that is to be woman in our society. My writing comes out of my unconscious of the conflicts between my idea of myself as a human beings and the idea that society has of me as a woman. All this makes my writing were clearly woman's writing.

#### **Conclusion:**

Shashi Deshpande protagonists are strong. They litter to sacrifice their individuality for the reasons of maintaining the traditional role models laid down by society for women. But they seek to revolve their problems by a process of temporary withdrawal.

Thus, in *Small Remedies*, Deshpande describe the major women characters in their management of their traditions roles. Savitribai, Madhu and Leela are the victims of gross gender discriminations but their self-achievement helps in discovery their identity and self. They went on with the dying desire towards their achievement facing the poverty while life threw upon them. They never looked back - passing through the isolation. The author Shashi Deshpande depicts in her novels the importance of women who are educated from the middle-class family and trying to prove their self-identity. Her tales describes women who are struggling in their married life because of the male domination and also in the public. Shashi's books are genuine rendering of the various issues that hamper the method for Indian middle-class women. Deshpande comprehended the female mind and attempted to test into her psyche. Her courageous women question and defame social establishments of affection and marriage. Shashi's worry about the conditions and position of women as reflected in her books. She shows the present Indian situation in the correct point of view. Being consistent with her feelings, Shashi Deshpande is fruitful in portraying the predicament of Indian women. Women's agony and their search for identity in the shattered marriage life is the crucial point to be discussed throughout Deshpande's novels. Her heroines well - adjusted and sensible attitudes towards their life make them recognise the significance of marriage and family. Deshpande always effectively shows her woman looking for remedy for the dilemma inside marriage. Hence, Deshpande's novels revolve around the major theme of marriage and adjustable life led by women belonging to various generations in the patriarchal social.

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