

**Seeking Affection And Security from Male Partner – A Critical  
study from Shashi Deshpande’s Women characters**

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Unlike the traditional based Indian women, Deshpande’s women are affirmative and self - confident. They are aware of their predicaments and know the way to solve their problems but their conflict is either to choose the traditional way as the patriarchal society dictates them from their childhood days onwards or the intellectual way as their rational feminine points out.

Through securing affection and love from other people, they say to themselves that, ‘If you love me, you will not hurt me.’ There are a number of ways by which they may get affection, such as trying to do whatever the other person wants, trying to bribe others, or threatening others into providing the desired affection. Deshpande’s protagonists such as Saru, Indu and Manju seek affection and love when they failed to attain that they turn themselves the seeker of security and love.

That is the main reason they select education for security and male partner for love. When they not succeed to attain the love from their spouse, they, without hesitate, have extra marital relationship. Indu in *Roots and Shadow*, Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and Manju in *If I Die Today* have “affection” with Naren, Dr.Boozie and Guru respectively. Their relationship with men after the marriage helps them to comprehend the real nature of men and to understand man – woman relationship easily. They fulfil their incomplete desire by having the accompaniment of their male friends.

Submissive involves observing with the wishes either of one particular person or of everyone in our social environment. Submissive persons avoid doing anything that might irritate others. They dare not condemn or give fault. They must suppress their personal desires and cannot defend against abuse for fear that such defensiveness will irritate the user. Many people who perform submissive believe that they are 'unselfish' and 'self-sacrificing'. Such persons seem to be saying, 'If I give in, I will not be hurt'.

Deshpande's other type of protagonists Jaya, Sumi and Manjari (until fall in love) are very good at their parental house and follow the traditional rules. That is the reason Jaya in *That Long Silence*, Unlike Indu, fears to have a relationship with Kamat. She has not enough courage to move further so she selects 'submissiveness' and surrender herself to Mohan and enacts as a submissive role.

The 'power' can be divided into two. The first one is 'Prestige' which is a protection against humiliation expressed by the tendency to humiliate others. The second one is 'Possession' that is the buffering against destitution and poverty manifesting itself as a tendency to deprive others. These types of persons seem to believe that 'if they have power, no one will harm them'. This could describe Horney's childhood once she decided to strive for academic success.

Urmi in *The Binding Vine* diverts her grief – sicken on the other two suffers Mira her mother - in - law, and shakuntala a low caste woman whose daughter Kalpana is in hospital as she is affected by brutal rape. Likewise, Madhu in *Small Remedies* shows her concern on Saitri Bai a musician, and Leele a woman politician. Unlike Urmi and Madhu, Sumi in *The Matter of Time* involves her selves with doing busy activities and Kshama in *Come up and Be Dead*, to prove her individuality, exposes her power and becomes a Headmistress to an exclusive school. Thus, these protagonists adopt themselves to live as a "prestigious" life. These three selfprotective devices have something in common. The person, who, by engaging in any of such three of basic anxiety, is attempting to cope with basic anxiety by interacting with others.

‘Withdrawing’ is the fourth way of protecting oneself against basic anxiety. It involves from other people, not physically but psychologically. Such a person endeavours to become independent of others, not relying on anyone else for the satisfaction of internal or external needs. For example, if someone collects a houseful of material possessions, then he or she can rely on them to satisfy external needs. Regrettably, that person may be too burdened by basic anxiety to enjoy the possessions. He or she must guard the possessions carefully because they are the person’s only protection against anxiety.

The withdrawn person realizes independence with regard to internal or psychological needs by becoming aloof from others, no longer seeking them out to satisfy emotional needs. The process involves an honest, or minimizing, of emotional needs. By renouncing these needs the withdrawn person guards against being hurt by other people. Devyani in *the Country of Deceit* “withdraws” herself from the worldly activities. As Horney says in *Inner Conflicts* that, “man can change and go on changing as long as he lives” (19), Deshpande’s Protagonists want change from their suppressed life. Horney proposes that the four self-protective mechanisms have a single target that to defend against basic anxiety. They stimulate the person to seek security and reassurance rather than happiness or pleasure. They are a defence against pain, not a pursuit of well-being. Deshpande’s women protagonists are want to protect themselves from their psychological tribulations so they select any one of production, according to their predicaments, that Horney mentioned in defend against basic anxiety.

Horney believes that any of these self-protective mechanisms could become so permanent a part of the personality that it assumes the characteristics of a drive or need in determining the individual’s behavior. Horney points out ten such needs that are termed ‘neurotic needs’ because they are irrational solutions to one’s problems. They are Affection and approval, A dominant partner, Power, Exploitation, Prestige, Admiration, Achievement or ambition, Self-sufficiency, Perfection and Narrow limits to life.

Horney notes that people all manifest these needs to some degree. For instance, everyone seeks affection or pursues achievement at one time or another. None of the needs is strange or neurotic in an everyday, temporary sense. But neurotics it makes them the person's intensive and obsessive pursuit of their satisfaction because the only way to resolve 'basic anxiety'.

Horney's neurotic needs can be divided into three types of 'neurotic trends. Both the affection and approval and a dominant partner are the compliant personality that 'moves toward other people'. The next, Power, Exploitation, Prestige, and Admiration, Achievement or ambition are the aggressive personality that 'moves against other people'. The last Self-sufficiency, Perfection and Narrow limits to life are the detached personality that 'moves away from other people'.

'Moving toward other people' is called by Horney as 'The Compliant Personality'. The compliant personality displays attitudes and behaviours that reflect a desire to move toward other people. They think that an intense and continuous need for affection and approval is an urge to be loved, wanted, and protected them from insecure. Compliant personalities exhibit these needs toward everyone, although they usually have a need for one dominant person, such as a friend or spouse, who will take charge of their lives and offer protection and guidance.

Deshpande's Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* wants to be loved by her parents and protecting by them. When she can't attain her parents' affections, she turns her back to seek the love and protection. She wants to attain the protection by obtaining Medical degree and love from Manu. As Horney suggests that compliant people are saying, 'Look at me. I am so weak and helpless that you must protect and love me'. Saru when she failed to get love and protection from her husband Manu, she approaches her father and says that "Baba, she was unhappy, help me, Baba, she is in trouble. Tell me what to do" (DHNT).

The complaint people also regard other people as superior, and even in situations in which they are notably capable, they see themselves as inferior. Because the security of compliant personalities depends on the attitudes and

behaviour of other people toward them, they become excessively dependent, needing constant approval and reassurance. Jaya in *That Long Silence* is really intelligent and has a capacity to produce a well work of art. It is also noted that Deshpande shows her she has received an award for one of her story writing but thinking her writing wounds her husband Mohan she never hesitates to give up her writing. As Horney says any sign of rejection, whether actual or imagined, is terrifying to them, leading to increased efforts to regain the affection of the person they believe has rejected them so Jaya leaves her writing profession thinking she may lose her husband Mohan's affection.

Horney finds that compliant persons have reserved profound feelings of rebelliousness and unkindness. Either Saru or Jaya, they act as rebellious and unkindness. Jaya, though she behaves well with Kamat she later leaves him when he is at the moment of death. It expresses her unkindness.

Moving against other people is called 'Aggressive personalities. People of this type think that everyone is hostile. They regard only the fittest and most cunning survive in the world. Although their motivation is the same as that of the compliant type, to alleviate basic anxiety, aggressive personalities never display their fear of rejection. They act tough and domineering and have no regard for others. To achieve the control and superiority so vital to their lives, they must consistently perform at a high level. By excelling and receiving recognition, they find satisfaction in having their superiority affirmed by others. Deshpande's Kshama and Devyani in *Come Up and Be Dead* act as very aggressive manners to others. They lead a prestigious life. They drive themselves hard to become the best; therefore, they may actually be highly successful in their careers, although the work itself will not provide intrinsic satisfaction.

Moving away from other people is called the 'Detached Personality' detached personalities people are maintaining an emotional distance. They must not love, hate, or cooperate with others or become involved in any way. To achieve this total detachment, they strive to become self-sufficient. Devyani in *the Country of Deceit* has totally a detached personality that is the reason she refuses to marry anyone.

These detached personalities people have an almost desperate desire for privacy. They need to spend as much time as possible alone that is why Devyani spends her time with gardening rather having human relations. Their need for independence makes them sensitive to any attempt to influence, intimidate, or require them.

They need to feel superior, but not in the same way aggressive personalities do. Because detached people cannot actively compete with other people for superiority that would mean becoming involved with others - they believe their greatness should be recognized automatically, without struggle or effort on their part. Devyani's power and her greatness are to automatically known by her sister Savi and her relations. One manifestation of this sense of superiority is the feeling that one is unique, that one is different and apart from everyone else.

Horney's the three personality types are similar to the styles of life in Adler's personality theory. The aggressive personality is like the dominant or ruling type, and the detached personality is similar to the avoiding type. This is yet another example of how Adler's ideas influenced later explanations of personality. Horney found that in the neurotic person, one of these three trends is dominant, and the other two are present to a lesser degree.

In *Dark Holds No Terrors* Saru is affected by sexual difference and then suffers as an unwanted child to her parents. After marriage she has endured from her husband Manu's male suppression. Saru's feminism springs out as a reaction to this discriminatory psychological set up of society and her parents in particular. Secondly, Saru also has the deep-rooted mentality of an unwanted child. Thirdly and most tragically, Saru suffers the bruises of a terrible physical trauma on her psyche.

After the first moment of hesitation, she feels that there is nothing that holding in her. Saru, who fails to attain love from her parents, finds Manu as a redeemer. She thinks by marrying Manu, she can escape from her alienation and can permanently break in the bitter relationship with her parents especially from her mother but Manu fears that cutting Saru off from her parents will be agonizing for

her. On the contrary, she feels quite happy for detaching from her parents. She successfully deletes the memory of her mother and thinks satisfactory that she breaks away from her mother. Saru takes a vow that she never sees her parents again. Thus, she successfully comes out from the first tribulation and lives her life with Manu happily.

Saru's married life is happy when she has been a student and Manu has been the breadwinner. Saru leads her life happily though she lives with him in a small room and some filth and stench. But problems begin to slowly when she becomes as a doctor in her profession. Saru's economic independence makes Manu hurt his male pride. Saru, who is young and quite new to her profession, is excited with her job but Manu's behavior begins to change. Saru's interest in her profession makes her to do many activities and takes more time. Due to tired Saru avoids Manu but Manu thinks she deliberately avoids him. Manu's ego is hurt by her success, he feels inferior. The sense of inferiority makes him brutal in his behaviour. Not later Saru realizes the reason for his sadistic activity. She says that, "a + b they told us in mathematics is equal to b + a. but here a + b was not, definitely not equal to b + a. it became a monstrously unbalanced, lopsided, unequal, impossible." (DHNT 42)

When she feels her profession is the reason for her sufferings, she decides to give up her beneficial job. She says Manu,

I want to give up working. Was it I who had said that? We stared at each other in equal astonishment. And silence again. But now I knew my lines. They came to me, the words I had rehearsed to myself. 'Manu, I want to stop working. I want to give it all up ... my practice, the hospital, everything.

(DHNT 79)

But she can't tell her sexual pain to him. She wants to try to save her marriage and at the same time she wants to escape from his brutal attach at every night, for that she is even ready to sacrifice her valuable profession. Many times, she tries to convey her

pathetic feelings to Manu but every time she attains failure. Whenever she has a chance to expresses her feelings to Manu, Saru's mind says each time that,

Tell him. Tell him now. Tell him what he does. Tell him you can't stand it any longer. Tell him you're prepared to sacrifice everything as long as he leaves you alone. To sleep alone in a room, to be myself on a bed, to be untouched, unhandled ... only then can I be clean again. (DHNT 80)

But Saru never says about his brutal activity. She tolerates as she has love on Manu and for her children's sake. During that time, she hears the death news of her mother through her childhood friend Manda, she decides to go to console her father. In fact, this desire is forced by Manu's behaviour. She goes to her father's house after a gap of 15 years. Actually, the moment when she weds with Manu, she takes a vow that she never visits her parental home. However, she returns to seek refuge, unable to bear the brutal attack of her husband. It is generally true, if a woman wants to release from her conjugal bond, she has no other way to escape except her parental house in patriarchal society. The paper concludes that women should seek their own identity by developing their abilities and pursuing careers.

#### Works cited

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