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## EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL 'A MATTER OF TIME' BY SHASHI DESHPANDE

T. Sailaja<sup>1</sup> and Dr. V. B. Chitra<sup>2</sup>

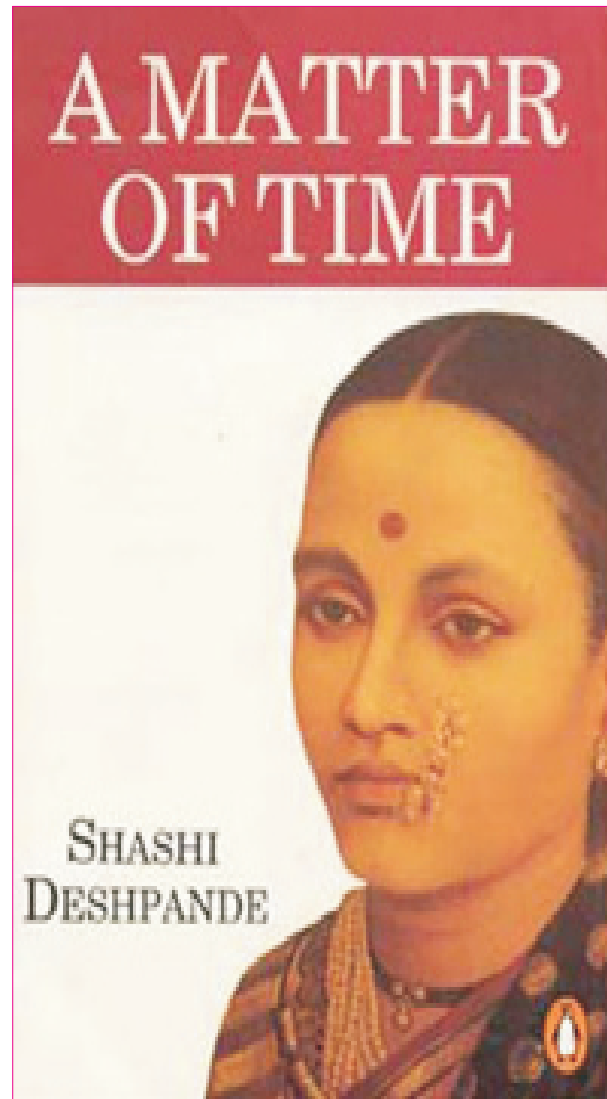
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### 1.ABSTRACT

**T**he novel 'A Matter of Time' of the feminist writer Shashi Deshpande depicts various traditionally motivated characters. This novel gives a homely story of 4 generations of a particular family residing in a house named 'Vishwas' meaning trust. This particular paper gives a brief account of every female character. A study of how women are derived of freedom in this patriarchal society. The present paper illustrates about woman's emancipation and empowerment in the modern society.

Shashi Deshpande is a great feminist writer only female characters involved in this novel are analysed. Shashi Deshpande concentrates on the hurdles, triumphs, difficulties of woman characters. The attitude,



T. Sailaja

behaviour, treatment towards the females is studied in this paper. An attempt to bring out the inner feelings of the author towards the females is made here.

**KEYWORDS:** Emancipation, empower, alienation.

### 2.INTRODUCTION TO AUTHOR:

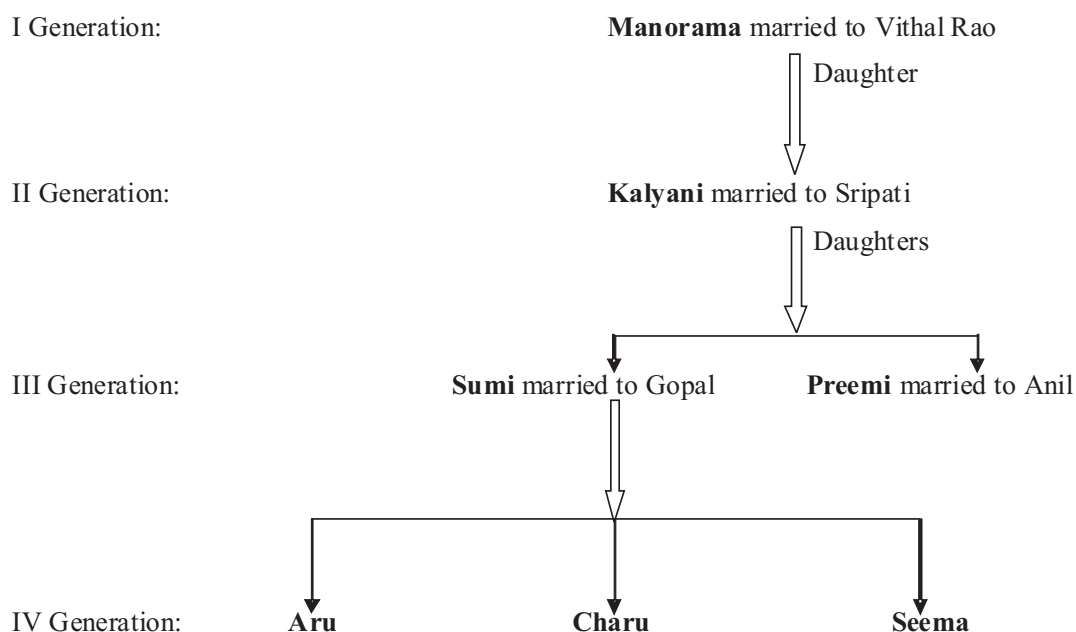
Shashi Deshpande, the pride of Dharwad , Karnataka, is a one of the best known feminist writer in Indian English literature. Born to a renowned Kannada dramatist and a Sanskrit scholar, Sri Ranga. She pursued her education in Dharwad and Bangalore. She started her writing career in the year 1970 with short stories.

She is a writer of her own kind, with the perception of female domination and social suppression. She has a soothing heart to the women society of the nation. Hence gradually she has emerged as a one of the best feminist writers. She has tried to inculcate the feministic attitude in all her writings.

Shashi Deshpande has written about 11 novels. A few to be named which have earned fame throughout are, 'That Long Silence', 'Binding Vine', 'The Dark Holds no Terrors', 'A Matter of Time', 'Shadow Play' etc. She has discussed various aspects of human relationship is of immense importance to her. In the present article the same mother relation is highlighted, extracting from her novel 'A Matter of Time'. Difference of attitudes is seen from generation to generation. An attempt is made to put forth these qualities in the resented paper. Thus Shashi Deshpande is a female supporter of the society.

### 3. FAMILY TREE (VAMSAVRUKSHA) SHOWING IV GENERATIONS:

The novel 'A Matter of Time' is a story of a family involving 4 generations. Of course the actual story starts with the second generation. The following figure gives the family tree of this family.



**Fig. 1 Family tree showing the IV generations**

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERS:

The novel 'A Matter of Time' starts with the couple Vithal Rao and Manorama. The eldest daughter, Manorama of her parents was tall, beautiful and fair in complexion. Manorama lost her mother soon after her marriage so she had no way out for her feelings. Manorama was induced with psychological feeling that if she could not give birth to male child, Vithal Rao would marry another woman. But in reality she had a daughter Kalyani. The sight this daughter always reminded Manorama as a failure to give birth to a male child.

"Manorama wanted a son; instead there was Kalyani. Not an unloved child, no never that. But for Manorama, she became the visible symbol of their failure to have a son." (AMOT 150-151)

As Manorama had maternal feelings, she got Kalyani married to her brother Sripati, with an intension that her property could remain in the hands of her maternal side.

"Perhaps, after this, Manorama felt secure. The property would remain in the family now." (AMOT 129)

Though the relationship between Manorama and Kalyani was rift based, the birth of a son to Kalyani soothed their relationship. But this revealed back as soon as Kalyani lost her son. Kalyani was affectionate to her father but this was not liked by Manorama. Manorama even blamed Kalyani for the death of her husband Vithal Rao. So the character of Manorama seems to be peculiar, that a mother also did not like her own daughter even in terms of adverse situations.

The next generation includes Kalyani and her husband Sripati. The family relationship involves long silence of Kalyani for a period of 35 years. Kalyani is deprived of loving her husband Sripati who believes that Kalyani is responsible for the loss of their only heir to the family. The struggle of Kalyani involves fear and grief in their family. She fears that history may repeat again victimising her own children to anguish and pain as she has experienced.

Kalyani has two daughters Sumi and Premi, unlike her mother she was very affectionate to her children. Sumi is married to Gopal and Premi is married to Anil. Like her mother Sumi is betrayed by her husband for no genuine reason. In spite of this incident, she never looked back in her life. She takes this departure of Gopal as normal and creates her own individuality in the society. Though the rudeness of Gopal towards Sumi aggravates, Sumi never hesitated to move forward in life, and instead she left an impression of grace and courage.

The departure of Gopal in Sumi's life after 23 years of marriage built in courage and made her very strong.

"The picture she presents to the world is one of grace and courage, to be admired rather than pitted. Unchanged, except for a feeling-which only those who know her well are aware of-of something missing in her." (AMOT 172)

Though she was very lethargic and lazy before marriage, she grew to be an independent woman who struggled to create and maintain her identity after Gopal left her alone. Her mental state was so saturated that she never bothered to know the whereabouts of Gopal.

"...what do I say...That my husband has left me and I don't know why and maybe he doesn't really know, either? And that I'm angry and humiliated and confused...? Let that be, we won't go into it now." (AMOT 107)

So the attitude of Sumi is very strange before and after her marriage. Sumi lives an individual life. She grows to be an emancipated woman and stands alone bravely facing adversities of life. She even rejects to accept the compensation offered by Gopal. Till the last breadth of her life Sumi struggles all the way alone.

"It takes time to get used to sharing your life with another person, now I have to get used to being alone." (AMOT 23) She feels lonely deep inside. But her actual enemy which is brewing inside her is not loneliness, "it is a sense of alienation." (AMOT 23)

In the long run of 23 years of wedded life Sumi and Gopal have three daughters Aru, Charu and Seema. This is the fourth generation of the family.

Aru being the eldest among the three takes the initiative to reconcile the relationship of her parents in consent with her aunt Preemi. But the attitude of Sumi gears an impression in Aru's mind that her mother is the only person responsible for the disruption of the family. Aru sees a ray of hope for the reconciliation of her parents. Soon Aru realises that Gopal is the prime victim for the separation of their parents. Unfortunately this realisation comes to Aru after Sumi's death.

These characters establish their self identity with economic independence which is termed as emancipation. The story concludes with a new hope of life.

## 5.CONCLUSION:

The novel 'A Matter of Time' of Shashi Deshpande shows various controversial characters of the same family. Despite the relation of a mother and daughter it is seen that the attitudes of each generation is

very different.

The psychology of Manorama of not having a son as a heir to the family reflects her weakness to have a negative feeling on her husband Vithal Rao

Kalyani's long silence has no impact on anybody. She suffered in her self

Sumi stood as an individual with lot of potential even after the betrayal of her husband, Gopal.

Aru at a young age takes the responsibility and tries to reconcile her parents but in vain.

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