

## Feminism and Husband-Wife Relationship in Society in Shobha De Novels'

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### ABSTRACT

Shobha De is a wonderful writer because of her extraordinary ability to communicate about extremely delicate aspects of the human condition. She has a unique ability to convey the complexities of interpersonal interactions, particularly those between men and women. Some in India with more conservative views have spoken out against her openness on the subject of sexuality. People are aware of some of her many qualities, but on the whole, they have no idea that she is a complex, multifaceted individual who can deftly juggle a wide range of skills. Traditional readers' opinions on the subject matter of her literature are the last thing you should consider, in my view, so don't bother listening to them. It's likely due to her rising widespread renown as a writer of imaginative prose. Most of her fans like her for two reasons: the content she covers and the unique way she presents it. This study aims to analyze how Shobha De approaches feminist concerns in her writing, focusing on Snapshots in particular. These females have the moxie and good judgement to keep going strong as a couple. Asha Rani and Akshay Arora's romance in *Starry Nights* (1991) is a great illustration of this sort of pairing. Men don't care about women's uniqueness, compassion, or perspective, but these women want more freedom to make decisions for themselves. They act irresponsibly, such as having extramarital affairs to vent their anger, or they may even do so.

**Keywords-** Man-woman, Universal, Multitasking and Relationship.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Shobha De is a member of a small group of Indian authors who write in English and hold a unique place in India's literary canon. She is also a journalist, in addition to being a writer. Her knowledge and experience are invaluable in each of these spheres. Her success as a writer may be partially ascribed to her talent for deftly articulating, with just a hint of humour, the complexity of human existence, social and sexual relationships, and women's psychology. Her work is known for being accessible to a wide audience. There have been a lot of orders placed for copies of her books. She demonstrates this as a facet of education as well as the influence of Western culture on the social mores and family structures of Indian society. The majority of De's works deal with the predicament that has hampered the careers of a great number of Indian female authors, and

De herself serves as the paradigm for this problem. She is emblematic of a new breed of fearless female authors who are not ashamed to write about the challenges and triumphs they have faced as women. She was always one of those authors, even from the very beginning. De makes an effort to give the impression that the new lady is forceful, determined, and motivated. She gets obsessed with her objectives and strives to impose them on everyone around her so that she might receive the respect that she feels is rightfully hers in a society that is ruled by men. Simone de Beauvoir was a French feminist who wrote extensively about the struggles that women encounter inside themselves over their responsibilities in contemporary society. De has the same perspective on the struggles and accomplishments of women that Simone de Beauvoir did: Despite the fact that contemporary women are beginning to dismantle the illusion of femininity in a variety of tangible ways, they

continue to struggle against barriers that prevent them from fully fulfilling the human existence to which they are entitled. Despite the fact that they have made some progress, this is still a concern. Marriage, which often comprises a large amount of devotion to one's husband, is their customary end. This is due to the fact that a disproportionate number of the world's most significant economic and social jobs are still performed by males. Because the majority of them were raised by their mothers in a society that places a strong emphasis on marriage, the majority of them end up getting married.

The ladies of Shobha De search for pleasure in the form of unbridled ardour since the new definition of pleasure encompasses the possibility to make one's own choices about one's own finances as well as one's entire sexual liberty. Because of the country's cultural standards, women in India have historically been subject to prejudice. Because men have the right to independence and autonomy, it is acceptable for them to have sexual relationships with other people outside of their marriages. There are no societal ramifications for the actions of men who leave their families to participate in sexual activities with prostitutes or whores, regardless of whether they pay for such acts with cash or in kind. This is true whether the men pay the prostitutes in cash or in kind. It appears that no one is concerned about the lonely lady who waits at home day after day for her husband to return, despite the fact that he never does. What actions would you suggest she take in order to extricate herself from this predicament? Simply by sobbing, she cannot take her own life or harm her life in any way. It is not acceptable for a married woman to have sexual relations with a guy who is not her husband because society believes that a married woman is missing something essential when she does not have a masculine presence in her life. She does not want her desire for sexual intimacy to be guided by social conventions rather than by the emotions she is experiencing in the moment. Due to the stringent regulations around marriage that are followed in India, it is against the law for women in our society to have sexual interactions with males outside of the context of marriage. On the other side, the women in the works written by Shobha De have brains that are open enough to allow them to maintain their relationships and hookups regardless of whether or not the men they are involved with are married. These two ladies have reached a level of self-assurance and decency in their partnership that allows them to defend it in a reasonable manner. *Starry Nights* (1991), starring Asha Rani and Akshay Arora, is the film that most exemplifies this kind of romantic comedy.

The primary female characters in this tale are not going to submit passively to the superficial norms that males have set for society. In order to alleviate the mental exhaustion they endure, the women of Shobha De do not shy away from seeking pleasure wherever they may find it. This goes against the grain of the

conventional gender norms that have been established since it is assumed that women will take an active role in sexual encounters. She is strongly encouraged to disobey her natural predisposition towards sexual enjoyment and to engage in activities that provide sexual satisfaction without any reservations. Because she is confined to this inferior role, she is able to avoid the public disgrace that would result from caving into her sexual cravings, which are looked down upon by society. In the realm of Shobha De, the females of their civilization build their own unique culture when they defy the norms that govern their society. As a result of the fact that she devotes her entire being to the process of producing books and depicting the female protagonists in those novels as having a variety of distinct personalities, she is able to avoid the temptation to be overly idealistic when she is writing about women. If her characters had been males, she never would have been able to accomplish her goal. The women of Shobha De have developed a wide variety of methods for attaining sexual fulfillment, and they aren't afraid to construct their own attitude and behaviour, even if it goes against the grain of mainstream society. The ladies of Shobha De have constructed a wide range of tactics for achieving sexual gratification. The vast majority of them are city dwellers who give morality and religion very little to no thought. They long to be liberated from the confining constraints of traditional gender roles and sexual mores more than anything else in the world.

They want the same rights and freedoms for themselves as are enjoyed by males. Because males view women as objects that can be bought and sold on their own terms, they force women to conform to traditional forms of servitude. For example, they may force women to remain silent while they are subjected to verbal or emotional abuse. As a result, society expects women to suffer and exert a significant deal of effort before acknowledging their humanity. The female characters in the writings of Shobha De find that their sexual encounters significantly contribute to their overall satisfaction level. The author contends that homosexuality is neither something to be ashamed of nor something to be afraid of. She has discussed how sexuality may be enticing to people of both sexes and might potentially affect the course of their lives. Her book from 1995, *Snapshots*, had an article in which she remarked, "Sex is no longer the most dreaded and despised three letter word in India, is enough to celebrate."<sup>(3)</sup> In today's fast-paced, urban environment, a woman would do everything and everything that comes to mind to fulfil her personal need for pleasure. This is especially true in metropolitan areas. Asha Rani, the "heartthrob of millions" and "queen of Bollywood," is a prime example of this trope because she utilises the "Bed" as her most horrible weapon in her quest to find joy in the act of killing men. Asha Rani is a prime example of this trope because she is the "heartthrob of millions" and "queen of Bollywood." When a man has

spent time in bed with her, he will be preoccupied with thoughts of her at all times. She seduced the flight attendant who had flown with her father and had sexual encounters with him, as well as with Kishen bhai, Akshay Arora, Abhijit, Jay, and Jojo. Even though her enchantment made some men feel fear, they were unable to resist the temptation to seek her out for pleasure, and as soon as they did so, they found themselves in a hopeless situation. Asha Rani took great pleasure in putting an end to them. Her perspective is that the bed is comparable to a battlefield due to the fact that it contains a conflict between two human bodies as well as a conflict between two separate brains. In every one of their confrontations, Asha Rani emerged victorious. In spite of the fact that they loathed and disliked her, guys couldn't help but be attracted to her. On this battlefield, Asha Rani experienced an incredible amount of sensuous pleasure, which she placed a high value on. The bed has become the battleground, and some have likened her to a notorious criminal who also happens to be a very attractive lady. The first step in Asha Rani's game strategy was almost always an in-depth analysis of her rival's capabilities, a task at which she excelled due to the extensive amount of time she had spent playing the game in the past.

Then, after they are in bed together, she employs every ruse in the book in an effort to coax him into relaxing so that she may have what her heart truly desires. After all, she has every intention of accomplishing that goal. Asha Rani found that she appreciated the company of men the most when they were participating in the activity that she considered to be her favourite game, the art of making love. There was absolutely no correlation between age and engagement in sexual activities. She had sexual encounters with men of all ages, including Amar, a rising star who was only a few years older than she was when she had him. She also had sexual encounters with younger males. In point of fact, she had known from the time she had first seen him on the set of the movie that they were both working on that she was hopelessly and hopelessly in love with him. She went so far as to make a formal request that he be cast in the role that she would be playing opposite of him in the film. In the film *Starry Nights* (1991), he voiced his wish to finish a scene from their movie that had been cut short due to a lightning strike in the following manner: "Hey, guys, do you guys remember that time in our movie when our lips were ready to contact and the camera cut away to a flash of lightning?" It would appear that I am having problems with my memory right now. If I were to attempt that, would I be able to... (29)

#### ***Changing Image of Woman in Socialite Evenings***

The year 1989 saw the publication of *Socialite Evenings*, which was Shobha De's debut novel. As her earliest known piece of writing, it depicts the oppression of Indian women at the hands of their husbands and is generally regarded as her debut effort. Karuna, the protagonist of *Socialite Evenings*, is portrayed as a self-

reliant, self-assured, and potentially successful woman who aspires for autonomy in all parts of her life. *Socialite Evenings* is set in the 1980s and follows Karuna as she becomes a socialite. She discovers that sex is a powerful instrument that may help her achieve both pleasure and success in her life, and she learns to employ this tool as she develops into a woman.

Karuna's life, on the other hand, gets off to a sad start practically right away since she gets married at a young age and is rather bored with her spouse, who adores her mother more than he adores her. Despite this, Karuna's life continues on its depressing path. She comes to the realisation that the life of an Indian woman is a tired generation of wives who have no goals left, and that marriage is analogous to a skin allergy, an irritant all right. This leads her to the conclusion that the life of an Indian woman is a generation of wives who are weary. (This is the 65th episode of *Socialite Evenings*)<sup>2</sup>. Despite the fact that it was her very first time modelling for a newspaper, she continues to do so despite the fact that her traditionalist father smacks her for bringing disgrace to the family name by putting the family's reputation at risk. She finally wins the prize that the Ad club gives out for the next year and becomes the recipient. She would prefer to write advertisements on a freelance basis because of the freedom it offers. She not only achieves her goal of being a modern independent woman, but she also starts making commercial films after her success in achieving that goal. In point of fact, she finally accomplished her longtime goal of reaching this degree of professional success because of this accomplishment. Karuna is presented by Shobha De as a very capable lady who is strong enough to circumvent her lot in life and launch into the kind of lifestyle that modelling requires, which is still not acceptable with traditional Indian families. This is because Karuna is a model, and modelling is still not suitable with traditional Indian families. This is something that Shobha De has done via the role of Karuna that she has played. Karuna achieves her goal of independence by being financially self-sufficient, competing for a spot in the competitive and professional world of advertising, and sating her need for a distinct identity. Karuna makes an effort to show the ways in which Indian women are discouraged from having autonomous lives and are obliged to comply to societal norms. This is made very obvious by the fact that she makes the following statement: "I am made to feel compelled and in debt." Even my insistence on working and making a contribution towards the costs of maintaining the home has become a topic of disagreement, which is a horrible thing to say (*Socialite Evenings* 69). Playing a number of different roles, depending on the circumstances and the time of day, is one way that Karuna meets the emotional and psychological needs that she has. She has a career in the entertainment industry as an actor, a writer, a model, and a homemaker. In addition to that, she is a well-respected member of the elite.

## II. REVIEW LITERATURE

"Dr. Swain concentrated his attention on Shobha De's *Socialite Evenings* and the way in which it paints a picture of the marginalisation of women at the hands of their husbands," 54 It is plainly clear, based on the reviews that came before this one, that despite the fact that there are a number of studies that are related to this current study, there is no other research effort that focuses on the current topic in such a comprehensive manner as the current research does. This conclusion is drawn from the findings of the current research. As a consequence of this, it is conceivable to classify the research challenge as unique, and as was mentioned in the first chapter, there is a demand to carry out research activity on the existing problem. "Dr. Kanade, the main character in Shobha De's novel *Starry Nights*, describes her bed as a battlefield in the book. According to him, the works that have been penned by Shobha De are the records of sex, and he feels that denying the truth of this situation might lead to disastrous outcomes.

Within the framework of India's traditional patriarchal society, Dr. Patil makes an effort to present Shobha De in a positive light by portraying her as a fervent supporter of gender equality and feminism. Dr. Patil explains how De articulates her disobedience in a manner that is very much in agreement with the views of some well-known feminists such as Virginia Woolf and Simon de Beauvoir, amongst others, by way of a daring projection of their most explosive and expressive heroines. This was accomplished by Dr. Patil's use of the most explosive and expressive heroines from their canon.

The bulk of Shobha De's previous scholars, or those who have done research on her novels, have concentrated their emphasis on the sensuous parts of her writing. This is because Shobha De is known for her sensual writing. The vast majority of the academics are of the opinion that the women in her novels are only a mechanism by which the male characters in the books may satiate their sexual urges. The great majority of academics consider Shobha de to be nothing more than a well-known novelist. They are of the opinion that she is a writer with a lower literary value or a lower literary interest than other writers, and that she ought to be virtually condemned for this reason. Shobha de is only renowned for her work as a novelist. In addition, they claim that her books belong to the genre of popular fiction and that many of them have been made into films or television series. It would imply that the researchers are more influenced by her social comments as well as her activity in the social world. The relationship between men and women, which extends beyond the physical element and is not merely related to the physical aspect of human life, will be the primary emphasis of this research project.

## III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study a variety of thematic concerns raised across Shobha De's canonical books
2. To Explore a sense of identity via the lens of Indian English literature by concentrating on imagery from religious and home settings.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research study makes primary use of a number of different passages selected at random from Shobha De's body of work as its primary data sources. To be more specific, the works of De that were studied and evaluated were the novels *Socialite Evenings* (1989), *Starry Nights* (1991), *Sisters* (1992), *Strange Obsession* (1992), *Sultry Days* (1994), *Snapshots* (1995), and *Second Thoughts* (1996) in order to better comprehend and interpret the topic. We used secondary data gathered from a wide variety of online and offline sources to conduct our research on the widely accessible publications. In order to accomplish this goal of delivering Shobha De's most up-to-date thoughts on the matter addressed in the article, a combination of recent and older interviews with the writer can be viewed on YouTube. This will allow the goal to be accomplished.

This study has the potential to be used as a supplemental resource in the future by researchers that are interested in the way of communication that is impacted by the fundamental human characteristics that are addressed in this article. Characterizations created by Shobha De are significant for the importance placed on the protagonists' existing mental states in each instance. The findings of this research will help to clarify the significance of that point.

The RESULTS Shobha De is a fearless feminist author who fights for the sovereignty of women in their sexual lives. This is due to the fact that the sexual relationship is the foundation of the man-woman interaction in the majority of families and cultures, as well as the fact that she presents her female characters as fighting against and opposing these standards in her work. She operates in this manner because she believes that the sexual liberty of women is a fundamental human right. When seen from a biological standpoint, the physiological connections that exist between a man and a woman are regarded as constituting vital human relationships. If he does not fully internalise this criterion, however, there is a possibility that it may cause issues in the relationship between a man and a woman. The works of writing that Shobha De has produced represent her viewpoint that men and women need to have equal access to sexual freedom across the board in all aspects of life. This viewpoint is representative of the lobbying that women do in favour of equal rights for everyone. As a direct consequence of this, the women who play the lead roles in her stories are strong and self-reliant, and they frequently have romantic relationships

with more than one man at the same time or across different eras.

In Indian culture, it is considered acceptable conduct for men to have many wives or to engage in romantic relationships outside of their marriage. However, it seems that women have a quite distinct set of challenges when it comes to the same issue. Shobha De, who places herself in the current upper and middle classes, combats sexism in literature by acting as a model for the "new woman" (Bhavani 3). Shobha De believes herself to be part of the modern top and medium classes. The dynamics of women's relationships with the males in their lives, such as their spouses, fathers, and children, have evolved as a direct result of the growth of women and the changes in their demeanour that have occurred throughout the course of their lifetime. As the dominance of male chauvinism wanes, women are searching for new voids to fill and functions to fulfil, both in the domestic sphere and in wider society. When discrimination based on sexual orientation is ultimately eradicated, a new understanding of the appropriate dynamic between men and women will emerge spontaneously. In the imaginary universe created by De, women are no longer the objects of men's exploitation, and in fact, they may even exceed their male counterparts in terms of their power and influence. However, as Divya C. points out, "De never justifies her protagonist's violation of moral codes," and instead focuses women's emotional need to be loved and cared for (542), her female characters flout contemporary sexual societal conventions in an effort to disrupt the traditional understanding of sex. This is the case despite the fact that De promotes women's emotional yearning to be loved and cared for. On the other hand, her male heroes don't purposefully transgress any laws in order to undermine the mainstream conception of sexuality that they embody. For example, the female characters in *Second Thoughts* are revealed to have internalised this portrayal of gender inequality as one of the many causes of the revolt. This is only one of the many factors. Interactions between men and women may become contentious when, as in the fictional worlds created by Shobha De, one gender deliberately strives to subjugate the other. The portrayal of humanity that is offered by Shobha De takes into account the ways in which one sex is treated more favourably than the other as well as the ways in which individuals react to varied levels of treatment. The majority of the primary characters in *Sisters* have engaged in sexual activity without the presence of a chaperone, a fact that has contributed to the tension that exists within the family. Their marriage is a charade since Maya's husband, Ranjan, does not possess the emotional or sexual capabilities necessary to fulfil her needs in both areas. Karuna's inability to have a happy married life is a direct result of her participation in *Socialite Evenings*, where she is required to spend time with a variety of male counterparts in order to fulfil her desire for herself. As a consequence of this, she will

never find true contentment in her marriage. The gay connection that existed between Linda and Asha Rani. Dhanda perceives "a rebellion against the patriarchal, traditional setup of our society" in De's work *Starry Nights*, as opposed to the typical heterosexual connection of a man and a woman. This is in contrast to the normal heterosexual connection of a man and a woman. Shobha De makes the switch from writing about female protagonists to writing about male protagonists in her newest novel, *Sultry Days*. Nisha, the book's main character, is a powerful and career-focused woman. However, the story also deals with the male characters who are the triggers for the core conflict in an open and honest manner, and it centres on their relationship with Nisha. Sujata, on the other hand, is a prostitute who rejects even her spouse and lives her life in accordance with the standards she sets for herself. She has a number of relationships with different men during the course of the novel. According to Ambadkar 453, the storyline of *Strange Obsession* centres on the lesbian connection that is shared by the story's two main protagonists, Meenakshi and Amrita. The next book by Shobha De, titled *Snapshots*, centres on a series of female characters who are dissatisfied with the relationships they have with their husbands or partners. In the book, the protagonists are portrayed to be consumed with sexual fulfilment and to fight the patriarchy by indulging in extramarital relationships. Moreover, they are shown to be fascinated with sexual gratification. This is only one illustration:

## V. DISCUSSION

Sigmund Freud's "psychoanalytic investigation stresses that human nature embodies some traits that yearn to satisfy the impulses—like aggression, the ego that drives him towards pleasurable experiences, and needs for getting love," as stated in the article "Freud's View On Human..." Shobha De characterized the women in the story, particularly those from the upper and middle classes, as being rebellious of normal patriarchal standards as a result of this viewpoint. According to Freud, the culture in which an individual grows up has a significant influence on the individual's conduct. Freud made the case for this in his published works. That is to say, one may make the case that a person's qualities are the product of and are impacted by the treatment that a person receives in a certain culture. This would be similar to saying that a person's personality is shaped by their upbringing. No one will ever revolt against the established social order until it is seriously undermined first. The revolutionary women that appear in the writings of Shobha De are, for the most part, powerless victims because of the patriarchal character of Indian society. However, they continue to fight for freedom in the same way. In the event that segregation exists in any form across the globe, there will have to be a revolution in order to put an end to it. Women in India and

throughout the Indian subcontinent are subjected to enormous societal pressure as a result of sexual discrimination. This restricts their capacity to exercise their rights and demonstrate that women are on par with males in all aspects, including the freedom to engage in sexual interactions outside of the context of marriage. As a result, these women are under a great deal of stress due to discrimination based on their sexual orientation. In spite of the fact that polygamy is illegal for women in India, Shobha de gives her fictitious female characters the ability to engage in the practice of polygamy, which has been typical in India for many centuries. Because of this, Shobha de presents the imaginary female characters she writes about as engaging in extramarital affairs.

In her books *Snapshots*, *Strange Obsession*, and *Sultry Days*, Shobha De makes the case for the sexual liberty of women by pointing out that elevating love to the status of a virtue is the outcome of sexual sublimation. This is the argument that she uses to support her stance. In his book *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, the renowned psychiatrist Sigmund Freud wrote that "normal copulation leads to the release of sexual tension and contemporary extinction of sexual instinct." Freud made this statement in reference to normal sexual activity. As a direct result of this, the couples' connection has blossomed and it continues to be very healthy today. Therefore, maintaining a respectful and open connection between the two individuals participating in a liaison, which is a matter of intimacy that meets the demands of sex partners like a husband and wife, is helped along by the involvement of a liaison. They are compelled to revolt against one another when this element of their bodily and emotional needs is not addressed since it causes them to feel helpless. That of the A. Sobha The 'vulgar' representation of women that may be found in De's works is another area of disagreement among those who are opposed to her body of work. The way in which these characters appear to contradict conventional portrayals of women's sexuality is one of the points of contention among critics.

Her female heroines routinely engage in sexually explicit conduct, which is widely considered to be unethical and potentially criminal. The sexual overtones that might be found in her writing have drawn criticism. Carpendale and Kerb rebut their opponents by arguing that "morality is less associated with one's thoughts" and that "it is revealed in one's actions." None of the women shown in De's paintings appear to regard their behaviors as immoral or sexual; rather, they appear to have put forth a lot of effort to liberate themselves from the confines of patriarchy and live lives on par with men. Women do the same kinds of things that males do, which is evidence that women are capable of doing those things just as well. Their tendency toward revolution is therefore constrained to the belief that men and women should be afforded equal rights and liberties. By doing this, they have taken an extremely forward-thinking stance. It has a striking resemblance to Freud's theory of

human evolution, which proposes that manifestations of human nature, such as the sexual impulse and the death instinct, are presently undergoing the process of historical restructuring known as Zilbersheid. It is generally agreed that Freud was the originator of this idea of human development. According to this hypothesis, Indians' perspectives on sexuality are shifting throughout the course of history, with more liberal attitudes being held by younger generations of Indians today. More specifically, this thesis contends that attitudes regarding sexual interactions have become more positive throughout the course of time. It is possible to see De's restructuring of thoughts around sex and sexual relationships reflected in the characters he has created. Dr. E. Bhavani discusses the problem of extramarital sexual behavior between married couples in her piece that is titled *Feminist Images of Women in Shobha De's Novels*. According to her explanation, "In *Socialite Evenings*, Karuna establishes an extramarital relationship with Krish, rebelling against her insensitive husband, from whom she ultimately divorces." Because Anjali and her husband have very different personalities, their marriage is not a happy one, and her husband also has a very authoritarian personality. When establishing the quality of a connection between two people, authority, in any of its guises, plays a crucial part in the decision-making process.

In intersexual partnerships, it is also common for the guy to take on the role of the leader. Those members of a community who hold positions of leadership are accorded a status that is distinct from the rest of the population. Both men and women have access to a variety of resources that may be used to further their power positions, including money, youth, beauty, and sexuality. The attractiveness, youth, and sexual allure of women are often seen as indicators of their authoritative status. These features affect the dynamics of their interactions with male counterparts. Author Shobha De places a significant amount of emphasis, all across her body of writing, on the subject of gender equality in authoritative roles. R. Rajalakshmi believes that disruptions in this equilibrium contribute to societal stress, and that it is at times of societal stress that people are more prone to behave dishonestly and hypocritically. It is interesting to note that the term "power" appears several times in Shobha De's *Snapshots*. We are not here to gratify their sexual appetites but rather their need for authority, and that is the reason we are here. Command and control over females. The two of us should be managed and directed. They will have the impression that they are royalty if they pay for your sexual experience (43). The female characters in De are shown as having a degree of sexual power over their male counterparts that most men want to achieve. This is something that most men strive to achieve. Instead of just serving as a method of giving male characters with a source of physical and mental pleasure, the sexual ties that are formed by the female characters in De's works

are employed as a formidable instrument to hold male characters in check. Sexual relations are troublesome for the story because they undercut the female protagonists' sense of agency and independence. During *Socialite Evenings*, Karuna and Anjali, for instance, seem to attract more attention than the guys do. According to Rame and Vanitha (2018), when it comes to relationships between men, women are "powerful enough to revolt against every unfair treatment on them because they have tremendous self-confidence" (Rame). This is the argument that they make in their article. In spite of the fact that she has been labeled a "soft pornographer," Shobha De is committed to illuminating, via the use of language, the moral collapse of contemporary Indian culture. It would appear, however, that she is more concerned in pushing the liberalization of women's expressive forms than she is in exposing the moral collapse of modern Indian society. She urges all of her female readers to renounce the archaic, patriarchal, and dogmatic customs that are still prevalent in today's society while hiding behind the guise of moral values. She is a proponent of the concept that women should be allowed the independence to choose their own paths in life. Many women of Indian origin experience substantial mental suffering as a result of this, as well as doubt over their identities.

The female protagonists of De's works are referred to by Kumar as "women of substance, self-substance, and free spirit." In *Starry Nights*, we explore the challenges that contemporary women face while attempting to locate their place in a society that is predominately male. Asha, the main character of the drama, experiences an emotional collapse as a result of her attachments to numerous different men. In spite of this, she does not shirk her obligations and instead puts in a lot of effort to make her life better. In a manner analogous to this, Alisha comes to the conclusion that she will battle for both her own "self" and her "share" of the company that is controlled by her father. We can see that Mikki places a larger value on her familial connections than she does, despite the fact that she sets a lower value on those links than her half-sister does. In her second book, *Strange Obsession*, De explores the emotional and psychological depths of her characters, particularly the lusty affinity that exists between two adolescent sisters, Minakshi and Amrita. This relationship is shown in the tale. In all of Shobha De's stories, the romantic relationships between her male and female characters are doomed to fail in the end. Her female heroines have no qualms about bringing up the issue of sexual behavior and frequently partake in it themselves. There is a connection between the ideas in De's works and the chemistry of the human body.

Darker tones are used to portray male characters in her writings. They are very unresponsive, and they are unable to accept responsibility for the way that things play out. They are exceedingly inactive. She possesses sharp eyes that enable her to see things that we

cannot, as well as absorbent ears that enable her to hear voices that are, for the most part, beyond our ability to hear. In order to explain the practical relationship that exists between a man and a woman, she examines topics such as heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual conduct, the psyche of women, and the challenges that they face. Shobha De explores societal issues in her works, such as the struggles of the individual in a society that is becoming increasingly materialistic, as well as the deterioration of human values that can be seen in relationships, ways of life, and thoughts that are excessively brutal, crass, and barbaric. Relationships of a sexual nature in her books are more like four-wheel-drive sex in all directions. It not only functions as a nice indication of ties that have been established but also as a mechanism by which relationships might be established with another person. It often serves both positive and detrimental goals in equal measure.

The novels written by Shobha De include romantic partnerships that revolve around sexual encounters and financial gain. V. Saraladevi makes the observation that the female characters in Shobha De do not see their sexuality as a constraint but rather as a powerful weapon in the power struggle that exists inside their relationships. To them, sex is not restricted to the body; rather, it is a symbol of power that governs man-woman interactions as a whole. Sexuality is not confined to the physical realm. Saraladevi is of the opinion that the female protagonist of "De" persists in her sad marriage for the sake of comfort and engages in mechanical interactions, believing sex as the key to sustaining the marriage. She also believes that she has no other options. Due to the nature of their relationship, it is impossible for them to truly consider getting married. Therefore, it would appear that they place a significant amount of focus on themselves, which is more likely to damage their marriage connections, which may be strengthened when there is complete trust and equality between the partners in the partnership.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Shobha De is dedicated to providing an open and honest account of what occurs as well as how she feels about it. There is nothing condescending or condescendingly arrogant in the way that she describes India or Indian culture; rather, she honors the genuine aspirations of Indian customs and traditions. On the other hand, there are those in India who adhere to more traditional notions of sexuality, and they despise her for being so forthright. Her writing has been well appreciated in many areas of the world, including numerous nations in Europe, and many of her works are included in the curricula of many Western countries. This is despite the fact that there have been many evaluations that have been critical about her work. She has become a symbol for shedding light on many points of view about the issue of women's rights and

independence in the modern day. She views extramarital relationships as a kind of protest or resistance on the part of women when they are denied the same options in life as men, with the goal of shattering the conventional and moral standards that are held in society. As a consequence of this, women in her society do not feel any moral qualms about engaging in extramarital affairs in order to satiate their sexual urges. They don't see anything wrong with utilizing sexual activity as a strategic instrument to further their career and personal objectives, and they don't see any reason why anybody else should either. In spite of this, the women of her culture, which is ruled by males, will not be satisfied until they have achieved their excessively generous goals. As part of their efforts to carve out their own space in the world, women will challenge the patriarchal system on occasion. They do this by going against the grain of accepted standards in order to get revenge on those who have wronged them, and at the same time, they collect fortune by pushing themselves ahead of everyone else. They refuse to accept any form of misery and are willing to go to any lengths necessary in order to achieve their goals of happiness and success in life.

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