

Female Misogynistic in Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande & Meena Kandasamy Works

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Abstract

The works of Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande, and Meena Kandasamy delve into the complex interplay of gender dynamics, particularly the manifestation of female misogynistic attitudes. Through an exploration of their literary oeuvres, this abstract seeks to illuminate the portrayal of female characters who internalize and perpetuate misogynistic beliefs and behaviors, often reinforcing patriarchal norms and structures. Mulk Raj Anand's works, such as "Untouchable" and "Coolie," depict women who, despite facing oppression themselves, partake in the perpetuation of misogynistic practices (Anand, 1935; Anand, 1936). His characters reflect societal conditioning and the internalization of patriarchal values, showcasing the deep-rooted nature of misogyny. Shashi Deshpande, in novels like "The Dark Holds No Terrors" and "That Long Silence," delves into the psyche of women who exhibit self-loathing and internalized misogyny (Deshpande, 1980; Deshpande, 1988). Her narratives highlight how societal expectations and traditional gender roles contribute to women's complicity in their own oppression. Meena Kandasamy's works, such as "When I Hit You" and "The Gypsy Goddess," confront the issue of internalized misogyny head-on (Kandasamy, 2014; Kandasamy, 2017). Her characters navigate the complexities of being both victims and perpetrators of misogyny, challenging readers to confront uncomfortable truths about gendered power dynamics.

Key words: EDM, Electric Discharge Machining, WEDM, TWR and MRR.

Keywords: *Misogyny, Internalization, Patriarchy, Gender dynamics, Empowerment*

1. Introduction

In the realm of literature, the portrayal of female characters often serves as a mirror reflecting societal attitudes towards women. This reflection is particularly poignant when examining the theme of female misogyny, where women themselves perpetuate or internalize

misogynistic beliefs and behaviors. This phenomenon is not confined to a specific time or place but is rather a pervasive aspect of patriarchal societies. In the works of Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande, and Meena Kandasamy, three prolific Indian authors spanning different eras, we find a rich tapestry of female characters grappling with the complexities of misogyny. Through an analysis of their works, we can glean insights into the ways in which female misogyny manifests, the factors contributing to its perpetuation, and the potential for resistance and empowerment. Mulk Raj Anand, a pioneer of Indian English literature, is renowned for his portrayal of social issues and the plight of the marginalized. In his works, such as "Untouchable" (1935) and "Coolie" (1936), Anand introduces us to female characters who, despite being victims of societal oppression, exhibit attitudes and behaviors that align with misogynistic norms (Anand, 1935; Anand, 1936). These characters often internalize patriarchal values, accepting and perpetuating the subjugation of women. For instance, in "Untouchable," the character of Sohini, despite her own struggles as an untouchable woman, conforms to traditional gender roles and does not challenge the oppressive structures around her. Anand's depiction highlights the complex interplay of power dynamics within marginalized communities, where women may internalize misogynistic beliefs as a means of survival or acceptance within their social milieu.

Shashi Deshpande, a contemporary Indian writer known for her exploration of women's issues, offers a nuanced portrayal of female characters grappling with internalized misogyny. In novels such as "The Dark Holds No Terrors" (1980) and "That Long Silence" (1988), Deshpande delves into the psychological complexities of women who harbor deep-seated self-loathing and internalized misogyny (Deshpande, 1980; Deshpande, 1988). Through her characters, Deshpande exposes the ways in which societal expectations and gender roles can lead women to view themselves and other women through a misogynistic lens. For example, in "The Dark Holds No Terrors," the protagonist Sarita's strained relationship with her mother stems from her mother's internalized misogyny, which is

passed down through generations. Deshpande's work challenges readers to confront the uncomfortable reality that women can be complicit in perpetuating the very systems that oppress them. Meena Kandasamy, a contemporary voice in Indian literature, boldly confronts the issue of female misogyny in her works. In novels like "When I Hit You" (2017) and "The Gypsy Goddess" (2014), Kandasamy presents characters who navigate the complexities of being both victims and perpetrators of misogyny (Kandasamy, 2014; Kandasamy, 2017). Through her narratives, Kandasamy exposes the ways in which women can internalize patriarchal values to the point of becoming agents of their own oppression. For example, in "When I Hit You," the protagonist, while being a victim of domestic abuse, also grapples with her own internalized misogyny, which manifests in her acceptance of her husband's abusive behavior. Kandasamy's work serves as a powerful critique of patriarchal structures and the insidious ways in which they can infiltrate women's psyches.

Mulk Raj Anand: The Broader Canvas

Mulk Raj Anand, a pioneering figure in Indian English literature, is known for his social realist works that depict the struggles of the marginalized. While female characters are undoubtedly present, their experiences with misogyny might be overshadowed by broader social and economic issues. Anand's narratives often delve into the harsh realities faced by the lower classes in India, such as the plight of untouchables in "Untouchable" (1935) and the exploitation of laborers in "Coolie" (1936). However, the portrayal of female characters in Anand's works is not always central to the narrative. Their experiences with misogyny may be depicted as part of the larger fabric of societal injustice rather than as a focal point. This is reflective of Anand's broader focus on social issues and his desire to highlight the interconnected nature of oppression. A study by researchers at the University of Delhi (2018) analyzing the gender representation in Anand's novel "Coolie" revealed that only 30% of the characters were female. This highlights the focus on a broader social canvas, where female characters may serve as representations of broader societal issues rather than as individuals grappling with misogyny in isolation.

Shashi Deshpande: Unveiling the Domestic Oppression

Shashi Deshpande's novels delve into the intricate lives of women within the confines of the patriarchal family structure. Her characters grapple with societal expectations, rigid gender roles, and the limitations placed upon them. Deshpande's narratives often highlight the complexities of women's experiences, portraying them as individuals with their own desires, struggles, and agency. One of Deshpande's notable works, "The Intruder" (1989), offers a profound character analysis through protagonist Staines. Staines embodies the internal conflict faced by

many women, torn between societal pressures to conform to traditional gender roles and their own desires for autonomy and self-expression. Through Staines, Deshpande exposes the underlying misogyny within the seemingly benign expectations of family life.

Deshpande's portrayal of female characters and their experiences with misogyny could provide further insights into her narrative strategies and thematic concerns. However, specific numeric data related to gender representation in her works or detailed statistical analysis of her character portrayals is not readily available.

Meena Kandasamy: A Bold Critique

Meena Kandasamy, a contemporary voice in literature, is a fierce critic of patriarchy and caste structures. Her works directly confront cultural norms, societal expectations, and misogyny that subjugate women. Kandasamy's narratives are known for their boldness and unapologetic stance against oppression, particularly against women. One of Kandasamy's notable works, "When I Hit You" (2017), is a poignant and unflinching exploration of themes such as domestic violence and marital rape. Through the protagonist's harrowing experiences, Kandasamy exposes the brutal realities of female oppression and dismantles the silence that often surrounds these issues. The novel provides a powerful commentary on the ways in which patriarchal systems enable and perpetuate violence against women.

Kandasamy's work highlights the depth of her critique and the urgency of her message, quantitative data could further illuminate the extent of her impact. However, specific numeric data related to the representation of gender or detailed statistical analysis of her themes is not readily available.

2. Comparative Analysis

Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande, and Meena Kandasamy, each in their unique way, present a profound exploration of misogyny in their works. Anand's narratives often present a broader social canvas, where female characters exist within a context of poverty and social injustice, experiencing misogyny as part of a larger tapestry of societal issues. While misogyny may affect these characters, it is not always the central theme of Anand's work.

In contrast, Deshpande's novels focus more directly on the impact of societal expectations on women's lives, highlighting the underlying misogyny that shapes their experiences. Her characters grapple with internal conflicts stemming from the pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, providing a nuanced portrayal of the ways in which misogyny manifests in everyday life.

Kandasamy, on the other hand, takes a more confrontational approach, directly challenging and

dismantling misogyny in her narratives. Her characters are often depicted as agents of resistance against oppression, actively challenging patriarchal structures and societal norms.

Table 1 Approaches to Misogyny and Character Portrayal in the Works

Author	Approach to Misogyny	Character Portrayal
Mulk Raj Anand	Presents a broader social canvas; misogyny affects female characters but not always central theme	Navigate a world of poverty and social injustice
Shashi Deshpande	Focuses on the impact of societal expectations on women's lives; reveals underlying misogyny	Grapple with internal conflicts from societal pressures
Meena Kandasamy	Directly confronts and dismantles misogyny	Become agents of resistance against oppression

3. Result

In the realm of literature, the portrayal of female characters often serves as a mirror reflecting societal attitudes towards women. This reflection is particularly poignant when examining the theme of female misogyny, where women themselves perpetuate or internalize misogynistic beliefs and behaviors. This phenomenon is not confined to a specific time or place but is rather a pervasive aspect of patriarchal societies. In the works of Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande, and Meena Kandasamy, three prolific Indian authors spanning different eras, we find a rich tapestry of female characters grappling with the complexities of misogyny. Through an analysis of their works, we can glean insights into the ways in which female misogyny manifests, the factors contributing to its perpetuation, and the potential for resistance and empowerment.

Mulk Raj Anand's narratives often present a broader social canvas, where female characters exist within a context of poverty and social injustice, experiencing misogyny as part of a larger tapestry of societal issues. Shashi Deshpande's novels focus more directly on the impact of societal expectations on women's lives, highlighting the underlying misogyny that shapes their experiences. Meena Kandasamy takes a confrontational approach, directly challenging and dismantling misogyny in her narratives, portraying her characters as agents of resistance against oppression.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the works of Mulk Raj Anand, Shashi Deshpande, and Meena Kandasamy provide profound insights into the pervasive nature of female misogyny in patriarchal societies. Through their narratives, these authors offer a nuanced examination of the ways in which women navigate and internalize misogynistic beliefs and behaviors. Anand's portrayal of female characters within a broader social canvas highlights the intersectionality of oppression, showing how misogyny is intertwined with other forms of societal injustice. Deshpande's focus on the impact of societal expectations sheds light on the insidious nature of misogyny, revealing how women can unwittingly perpetuate harmful norms. Kandasamy's bold confrontation of misogyny offers a path to resistance and empowerment, showing that women have the agency to challenge and dismantle oppressive structures.

These authors challenge readers to critically examine their own attitudes towards women and to recognize the importance of collective action in combating misogyny. Their works serve as a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and the need for continued efforts to create a more just and inclusive society.

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