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## PSYCHOANALYTICAL FEMINISM IN INDIAN WOMEN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

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### **Abstract:**

*Psychoanalytical feminism is amalgamation of psychological theories and feministic idealism. Psychoanalytical theories are the concept of development of unconscious mind and its behavior in infant, childhood and mature stages. Psychoanalytical theories are opposition on Freudian concept of human psychology regarding men dominance and subjugation of women.*

*Indian women autobiographies firmly stated psychoanalytical feministic approach in the autobiographers' making of self-identities.*

**Keywords:** *psycho-analysis, feminism, autobiography, women, Indian.*



Psychoanalytical feminism is women's protest for equal rights and revolt against suppression and subjugation. Though Sigmund Freud in his psychoanalytical theories gave the reasons behind gender inequality on biological basis that men are dominant because of having penis and women are having inferiority complex because of penis envy. Psycho-analytical feminists elaborately stated the reality regarding women's secondary status in society, due to development of unconscious in their childhood. Children's unconscious minds have developed by observing their parents, and social surrounding in which they born. Betty Friedan in her book 'The Feminine Mystique'(1963) elaborately stated the need of gender equality for the whole human race:

"To make one half of human race consume its energies in the functions of housekeeper, wife and mother is a monstrous waste of the most precious material God ever made"

(The Feminine Mystique -115)

Human beings need of Identity brings one satisfaction, happiness and prosperity. Indian women writers made their identities through their creative writing and in that particular journey of making self-identity they gone through difficulties due to their gender. Did Indian women explore their making identity journey through their autobiographies.

Meena Alexander's autobiography FaultLines (1993) is an excellent example of woman's struggle for making her self-identity through building her career in her own instinctual profession as a creative writer. Being a woman, she had to face lots of obstacles. So this treatment of inequality bothered her throughout her life and while writing about self she felt that she is writing her life story which is nothing but feminism: *"About being born in female body, about the difficulty of living in space"* (Fault Lines -3)



Meena's struggle started from her family itself, due to the dominance of patriarchal culture, her mother family opposed on her writing poetry. Meena Alexander started writing her poem in toilet, and this is the first revolt against the established the norms which was totally based on patriarchy.

Mallika Amar Sheikh wrote her autobiography 'I want to Destroy Myself' (2016) at the age of thirty-five, to explore her life, which was the example of male dominance and subjugation of women. Mallika Amar Sheikh very straight forwardly provoked the reality of social and domestic violence and exploitation of women in Indian lower class and lower-middle class.

Though Malika has creative talent of writing prose and poetry, and even singing and dancing but after marriage her creativity has not been appreciated or even ignored by her husband. She came to know the harsh reality about men's approach towards women, their views about women:

"But the dialogue between the bodies is a must. For write up to this day, the male animal cannot go beyond women's body. And so, the only link is forged in the realm of the physical." (I want to Destroy myself- 84)

Amar Sheikh's husband Namdevdhasal betrayed her, humiliated her, took disadvantage of her passionate love for him. Finally Mallika took revolt and separated herself from him, and created her identity as a poet.

Shashi Deshpande renowned novelist wrote her autobiography 'Listen to Me'(2018). The title itself suggests har appeal to readers for listening, that her urge to putting forth the Harsh reality of inequality and her moral degradation for being born in women body.

From childhood itself she had been exploited by her own grandfather and that drama of

harassment remained with her throughout her life. The male dominance and harassment she had been facing in her mature life even. Meena Alexander being a mature, straight forward, intelligent writer, she stated the harsh reality in a very simple manner:

"Find the right to vote, it was feared, would destroy the sanctity of family life. So, what is good for women is always bad for the family! So, it is always women who have to make a sacrifice for the good of the family" (Listen to Me -134)

Shashi Deshpande got Padma Shri award and many other awards made her life as an exemplum in front of upcoming generations.

All these autobiographies were written for exploring self- identity, psychoanalytical feminism is the main approach while writing these autobiographies. Feminist critics Julia Kristeva, Virginia Woolf, Kate Millet, Betty Friedan, Klein Melanie, Simone de Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter and many other made way for women equality in each and every strata of society.

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