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## **INDIAN WOMEN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES: EXPLORING SELF-ID**

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**Abstract:** *In later half of the 20th century, women become aware about their rights and their own identity, due to the spread of education. Though in society, patriarchy had been deeply rooted, and women's struggle for equality, for stating their identity was inevitable. As Virginia wolf stated: 'the world did not say to her as it*

*said to them, write if you choose; it makes no difference to me'. Overcome the obstacles is unavoidable part of a woman struggle for creating self- identity. Autobiographies of these prominent women explored there making of self.*

**Keywords:** *autobiography, self-identity, women, exploration, Indian.*



## Introduction :

Every standard autobiography depicts the life is worth to consider as to explore in front of readers. Autobiography as a genre is a handy tool to put forth the autobiographer's strong desire to achieve his particular goal. Every autobiographer strived to achieve his/ her aim. It is worth to be recognised and due to his /her consistency, patience, hard work he/ she worthy to explore self -identity through autobiography. So, the genre autobiography becomes a trust worthy source to get thorough knowledge through the autobiography of a particular person.

In fictional literature one can know about human psyche, humor and melancholy but when want to know the real life's ups and downs of the person one wants then, for autobiography, there has not been any alternative. It is firmly considered that autobiographer writes only truth and reader reads only truth, about the life of autobiographer. It is riveting to study autobiographies to know theory about life and struggle melodies and miseries in the life of autobiographer. At the same time one can know contemporary society, it's development, tradition, culture, circumstances and surrounding of the autobiographer.

When one thinks about women autobiographies, there are many more aspects than above. Women's had been going through shackles of patriarchy. There is long history of women's struggle for equality. In this research particularly, there are six women autobiographies of the autobiographers which came from different strata of society and difference states of India. Autobiography where written in later half of the 20th century when in Indian society women became aware about their self-identities. Though it was too hard in those days, so study of these autobiographies will reveal the fact about their pain-staking endeavor to overcome the obstacles as being a woman, a secondary human.

Six autobiographies have been taken for the research, Indian women autobiographies: for exploring self-identity. There are three literary and three non-literary autobiographies have been taken, in a brief exploration, for the sake of convenience.



Literary autobiographers Meena Alexander, Mallika Amar Sheikh and Shashi Deshpande had written in more subtle, intricate and aesthetic wave while non-literary autobiographers had written in more fact focusing simple, descriptive way. Meena Alexander belongs to Allahabad, Sudan and America had gone through her own mother's opposition for poetry writing. She had faced social and diasporic calamities, psychological and social trauma with positive ways and overcome with Brighton colours as renowned writer.

While living with her husband, Meena Alexander found herself in the cage in the freezing coal atmosphere of Manipolis. As like atmosphere she felt that her talent of creativity was also ruining that atmosphere:

"At home books tagged high in piles with no time to read them when my cigarette drop the into a waste basket...

... the basket started smoldering that thoughts sprang to mind: I am this basket this burning thing, how shall I bear my life here." (FL -147)

About statement is fully loaded with Mina alexander's feelings, her trauma, her awareness about her own situation is most important and this this is an identity of every creative personality.

Mallika Amar Sheikh had been exploded by her own husband a renowned writer Namdev Dhasal for her only crime that she loved him beyond limits. Though he also loved her she had not been able to keep his fidelity towards her and addiction of drugs and wine made him worst husband and father. Though Mallika Amar Sheikh is a good poetess, she was not recognised to her name due to her gender, being a woman, she had given secondary status. Malik Amar Sheikh, at the age of 16, she fell in love, with young dynamic charming personality, founder of dalit Panther, poet, Namdev Dhasal. After marriage she came to know



the harsh reality about the personality of Namdev Dhasal, about his various addictions of wine and drugs his infidelity, blasphemy. Though Malika is well-aware about her creative talent was suppressed by her husband after marriage. The most remarkable thing in Mallika Amar Sheikh personality is she decided to change overcome from the ugly treatment of her husband Namdev Dhasal:

"After that I tried at best as I could, wipe out the memory of him. I was trying to escape..... in ungraded moments, they would explode in my brain." (I Want -44)

Shashi Deshpande being a mature, versatile, straightforward author, her autobiography explores harsh reality of social disbeliefs about women and unequal humiliating social behavior of society towards her. Shashi Deshpande's constant, innovative writing made her recognised novelist.

Shashi Deshpande has gone through all criticism on her as being a woman, a women writer, and writer as a grandmother. Above all she got the essence of life, through her hard work, passion, devotion, and skill developing ability.

"It was this experience of going to London which give me, more than anything else, sense of having made my name- not in the sense of becoming famous, but more in sense of having forged an identity of my own." (LTM 180)

In non-literary autobiographers Padma Desai a brilliant economist wrote all about her faults and follies, efforts and patience without any restraint on herself. She was betrayed by her husband and suffered long in simphilise disease due to him. Though she grabbed an opportunity for study abroad to get away from her husband, she had to struggle for nine years



for getting divorce. Her deep suffering when I cannot buy following lines:

"I cannot bring myself either to despise him or or to forgive him. Although he is reduce to ashes, I cannot obliterate him because he became he became a part of me, having converted me from trusting wisp of a girl into a tortured guilt ridden woman."  
(B O -77)

Laila Seth, first Indian woman judge of high court and a frist women lawyer in supreme court went through several calamity but her calmness and broaden prospective of life overcome her and her family from drastic situations. Laila Seth not only brilliant but have was strong moral sense and at the same time have faith in inequality, due to that her approach towards women also equal to men:

"What kind of woman judge are you that you don't give any special weightage to women? We had such her hopes of you."(OB 261)

Manikuntala Sen communist freedom fighter of Bengal devoted her for the sake of social and political reform. Monikuntala Sen has also gone through lots of party disputes, social restraints and eventually alienated herself from party politics. Manikantala Sen's hard constant pains-taking work has a historical importance.

All these autobiographies are excellent examples of immensely passionate women. They created their self -identity by going through all obstacles of patriarchy. To genre autobiography came at handy tool to explore their self -identity. All these women autobiographers intricately exploited the genre autobiography. In that way these autobiographies became exemplum for upcoming generations.



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