

Jaya's Decisions and its Consequences Found in the Novel 'That Long Silence'

Dr.P. Suresh, J. Revathy

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Abstract: Decision making is the most important course of choosing a coherent choice from the open possibilities. When we try to make a perfect decision an individual must evaluate the pros and cons of each pronouncement, and should always study all the replacements. For an effective decision making, each person must be able to predict the consequence of their choice. Based on the terms mentioned above, each person should decide which option is best for a specific condition. This article is going to discuss whether the decision taken by women affects them psychologically. The fear of failure makes women to suppress their thoughts and decisions within them which reflect in some other way. If so, does the decision taken by a woman affect her personal and professional life? Do women's suppressed psychological fears and traumas of her unconscious mind reflect in their dreams? If so, how can they overcome it? The quest for the responses of these queries is explored in the novel *That Long Silence* (1989).

Keywords: Decision Making, Dream Psychology, Independent Decisions, Mental Traumas, Incorrect Decisions, Crucial Situations and Psychosomatic Insight.

INTRODUCTION

Decision making is an essential skill that every human being needs to use at some phase in their career. To prove good at decision making, one need to make the best potential choice in the shortest likely time, as well as he should be able to show reasons that support his decisions. Generally, the older the part, the more problematic these decisions become. Most of the people are forced to make complex decisions consistently as part of their routine; sometimes these decisions have to be made under penetrating pressure. Therefore a person needs to know that the people they handle and should know whether they can take the inventiveness when the situation requires and make good decisions in urgent cases.

In certain situations, decision making is a fundamental aspect of the role in a person's life. Subsequently, people need to extend the proficiency of an individual to make well-versed decisions. Of course, decision making is not just narrowed to the specific role; it relates to almost every aspect and the situation at every level. Good decisions are a crucial element of the day-to-day business. A person tends to value decision making because it is a skill that is required in different situation across many areas - from everyday tasks which is done to more complex ventures or unforeseen circumstances.

In today's situation, decision making is the most vital skill that absences in many women. It is not the problem of an uneducated mass alone; a woman even though educated suffers from taking important decisions at the crucial situations of her life. Women experience a lot from past traumas and present conditions of their life. Women always suppress their inner urge to prove themselves. This leads them to suffer physically and psychologically, at the particular stage they stop to express their thoughts and feelings with others. The problem arises at this stage because when they cease to show, they get noticed by others a lot. This creates the issue between the family members as well as within themselves; their inner self-starts to express it via dreams. Women being torn psychologically suffer in their unconscious state and fear a lot about failure and they are afraid to face the consequences. Does the decision taken by the women affect their personal and professional life? Do women's suppressed psychological fears and traumas of their unconscious mind reflect in their dreams? If so, how can the women overcome it? The

Dr.P. Suresh, Associate Professor, Department of English, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (Vels University), Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail: drsureshponnurangam@gmail.com

J. Revathy, Ph.D., Scholar, Department of English, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies (Vels University), Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail: revscharu@gmail.com

quest for the responses of these queries is explored in the novel *That Long Silence* (1989). Shashi Deshpande is one of the most skilful and talented contemporary women writers in Indian writings in English. Her novels eclectically employ the postmodern technique of deconstructing patriarchal culture and customs and revealing these to be a human-made construct. (Atrey, Mukta, and Kirpal, 15)

Human relationship, their issues, concerns and values play an active role in most of the works of Shashi Deshpande's. The cultural norms and customs of the society sojourn a woman's progress, it affects her physically and psychologically. This sort of our society is manifestly analysed in most of her novels. It is undeniably paralleled to us from the above-lines that this male dominance customs and their ethnicities affect women in various ways. Her books mirror the real face of the patriarchal society customs, which protects men and petrifies women from progress. P.D. Nimsarkar precisely states the theme of the author's novels thus;

Deshpande is concerned with people, the women and their relationships with others, like husbands, parents, children and sons and daughters. She has faithfully tried to construct womanhood in the contemporary context, society and the world (P.D. Nimsarkar 114).

In her novel, *That Long Silence* (1989), Deshpande rewrites the role of women, the search of their self and the expedition for their life. Deshpande portrays the future of Jaya in this novel, her decisions, rotations, and twists in her life based on her choices and how the customs play its active role in her choices. It deals with the mind-set of Jaya, the protagonist of the novel and the wrong decisions taken by her in the first phase of her life and the remedies to overcome the same with her next choices from the past experiences. This novel deals with the customs, love, the problem provoked by the status between the couple that affects the normal psychology of love. It also deals with the past life traumas that affect the future decisions of a woman, are revealed in this novel. Father neither prescribed nor favoured my trip. Instead, he said, 'Ask Bimmy'. (Mango – coloured Fish. P.3)

In the novel *Mango – coloured fish*, the father of the protagonist (Shari) never interferes in the decision of Saru or her mother, is it out of the negligence of his duty or care is still a dilemma. But Jaya's case it is always out of love. Jaya's father named her Jaya as it represents victory. Jaya, the independent soul before marriage gradually becomes dependent on her husband after marriage. Jaya's father always allows her to share her thoughts and her ideas with him. Jaya's father named her Jaya because he wants his daughter to be victorious in all her deeds. But now she fails him by deciding to stay silent, submissive to her husband because of the fear of failure in her married life. Jaya's father never advises her instead he gives suggestions. Jaya's father gives her full freedom to decide things in her life.

Decisions made in home management range in importance from major once in a lifetime. For example, choice of a marriage partner it is only in fairy tales that they live happily ever after (Knoll 1973)

As the above quote states, that when it comes to important decisions, the male member of the family takes charge of the decision. If it is the decision of marriage people's consideration of the bride's point of view on the marriage issue is gradually very low. Jaya father's same attitude is with Jaya's dada (Jaya's elder brother) except one thing. Jaya never feels lonely after her father's death because of her Dada. Jaya feels the absence of her father only when her favourite elder brother shows his right colour. Jaya's dad forces her to marry Mohan. Jaya's dada does not force it on her directly, but he insists on the importance of this situation and the requirements to be filled after her marriage. Thus he too forces his decision on Jaya. Jaya cannot accept others are pushing their choice on her.

'There's no need to hurry,'trying frantically, deviously, cravenly to get there on time. (*That Long Silence*, P.3)

Jaya never gives her suggestions or ideas to Mohan on any issues. Whenever Mohan says anything, she accepts it without even discussing the positives and negatives of the problem. Jaya dumps all the things she wants to talk in her mind. Even for small things she never reveals or advocates of what she wants. When the whole family get ready the movie and Mohan says not to get prepared soon because as the movie starts only after the advertisements. Jaya loves to watch the ads that depict the perfect family, but she seldom reveals that to Mohan instead pretends as if she agrees with Mohan's words.

First of all, no good wife could serve two masters – the masters being her father That way there can be no strife, no disharmony. (Ladies Coupe P.14)

In the above quote, Akila's mother from *Ladies coupe* states that before marriage her father is the master and after marriage, her husband is the master of the house. This does not change whether they are alive or dead. The same happens in Jaya's life too. Once when she was fond of the songs of Rafi and Lata's,

Jaya's father criticises her, he says that Jaya has poor taste. Jaya's mind still remembers those words of her father and never reveals her point of view to Mohan. She still thinks that Mohan will also utter the same words her father did. But Jaya forgets that her father criticises her but never forces his decision on her. Jaya thinks of that past incident and seldom conveys her views. Before marriage, she is dependent on her father and brother, and after marriage, the dependence is transferred to her husband. She seldom speaks back or conveys her view to anyone in the first issue.

'My story?' how could you have done it?' (That Long Silence, P.143)

Jaya, a good story writer, seldom writes novels or stories in magazines because of Mohan. Mohan felt that Jaya's first story depicts their life and he scolds Jaya for writing that story. Mohan thinks that the story written by Jaya is the replica of their personal experience and feels that it is a shame to expose their own life in front of the people around them. Mohan advises Jaya to stop writing stories. Instead, he asks her to write a story that admires others and does not replicate their life, and this brings out the story called 'Seeta'. Mohan arranges that and makes her write the story that pleases everyone. Jaya feels ashamed when others enquire her about the story she writes. Even though Jaya feels low in front of others, she decides to stay numb and obey Mohan also though she loves to write stories.

A pair of bullocks yoked together ... an apt phrase, but can it substitute for the reality? (That Long Silence, P.8)

Jaya thinks that the relationship between the husband and wife resembles the bullock cart. Jaya says that one should balance and adjust with the other to lead the life peacefully. When Mohan's job is in crisis because of the illegal dealings, he did with another person in his career. Mohan justifies it by saying that he did it for his family. Jaya does not utter a word even at this situation. She never accuses or questions Mohan even in this situation. Because of Mohan's condition, Jaya and the kids are in the state to leave their luxurious life and go to Bombay, the place where Jaya grew.

Indian women are deeply linked to social, cultural, religious and regional features, and their identity is thus multi-layered. (Nubile 1)

As the above quote states that women in society is deeply linked to socio-cultural customs and thinks that they must listen and obey the elders and their spouse. But they forget that they are another half of society. Even though educated, Jaya feels that their life will be peaceful only when both of them stick together. But Jaya forgets that a situation, the partner has to correct their better half when things go wrong. Jaya thinks her like a bull in the bullock cart that follows other. She feels that going on the opposite direction may rip off the family cart. So, Jaya follows Mohan's words to avoid problems. But she does not realise that this silence will rip off her from inside.

The authoritarian character of the traditional joint family entails decision-making powers concentrated, in the position of the eldest male members (Rao 1982)

As the above quote states that a male member of the family holds the decision making power in the family. The same happens with the family members of Jaya. Jaya visited her kaka's house after her father's death. At that time Jaya's Kaka shows her the family tree that frames and depicts the family members, in that family tree Jaya cannot find the name of the female members of the family. Jaya enquires their Kaka's about the missing names in the family tree; they said they did not include the female members as they leave the family after their family after their marriage when Jaya enquires about Kaki's names there is no answer. Even in today's scenario, even the women were not given priority, is clear from the family tree depicted by her kakas, when there is no room for kakis in the family tree, where will Jaya fit in that family tree. This frames to be another reason for Jaya to maintain her silence in all the things Mohan does.

Day and night, women must be kept in subordination to thehe must be worshipped as God. (Hunter College 1983, P.68)

As per our society, our women must be the subordinate to the male member of the family. It has been the custom that even though the women hold the highest positions in the society, she should obey the orders of the elders or others at home before marriage and words of her husband after the wedding. Jaya is clear that even though her brother loves her, he has more priorities to take care of than her. As per her family tree, she knows her priority well. Though she is talented, she does not want to create the problem by talking against her husband's desire. Thus she proves to be subordinate to her husband by obeying his words. From small things like going to the cinema, altering the house, she maintains silent by not uttering even a word against him. She never gives any suggestion on any matters, when her husband discusses with her. Through all these reasons she decides that being silent is the only way to survive within the family.

According to the correct but conscious definition of Aristotle, the dream is a continuation of thinking in sleep (Sigmund Freud, *Dream Psychology*. P. 55)

Jaya starts to suppress all her feelings and anger within her, and she never expresses it. This suppression of her rage and thoughts takes shapes in her dreams. As it is clearly stated above Jaya's goals is the continuation of her silence thinking about the various events happening around her. These incidents take shape in her thoughts and start to haunt her. The loneliness and the silence around and inside her take the form in dreams and begin to haunt her. The ideas become the solace, response and haunting factor of all her unfulfilled desires and suppressed thoughts. All the negatives of her past life start to haunt her in various ways in her dreams.

Why didn't you use that anger in your story? This would have been a better story if you'd banged your pots and pans in it ... (That Long Silence, P.147)

Kamat is the first criticiser of Jaya's stories. Jaya never stops writing even after Mohan's scolding. Instead, she decides to use the false name and Kamat's address for writing her novels. Kamat stays silent to whatever Jaya does. Any magazines do not accept most of Jaya's stories. They come back to Kamat's address without recognition. One of the stories of Jaya about a young widow gets rejected many times, and Jaya gets annoyed by this and finally approaches Kamat to come out with his view on her story. Kamat sees Jaya's real anger on the people who rejected her story, Kamat asks Jaya to blurt her rage into her writing. Kamat says that this anger is missing in her book. Women always show their rage inside four walls on the vessels they use. Kamat advises Jaya to come out of the cosy hole she hides in and show her passion in her writing. Kamat scolds that most of the woman like her plays a safe game to stay within the family hole so that they waste their talent and ruins them. Thus Kamat turns to be a true well-wisher in Jaya's life

Kamat is Jaya's well-wisher and the best friend, and he lives on the third floor of Jaya's Bombay house. He always gives honest comments on Jaya's writings. Kamat criticises Jaya for giving up her book and slams for writing useless blogs and wasting her talents. Kamat is the only person to whom Jaya reveals her true self. Kamat always encourages Jaya in all her deeds. But Kamat is no more now. Jaya comes back to the same house again, but she misses her well-wisher this time. Jaya decides to keep numb to whatever her husband says, and this creates many issues. Jaya does not openly discuss anything with Mohan; she suppresses all her feelings inside her mind. Jaya seldom expresses her views, her decision to be silent to whatever without reacting to the things happening around her becomes the major problem in her life.

'Why don't you stay dead and leave me alone?' you won't let me go!' (That Long Silence, P.151)

Jaya after moving to the Bombay flat, she was afraid to visit the apartment where Kamat stays, and she feels worried and uncomfortable to visit his flat. Jaya was the one who sees Kamat dead, and she left that place without helping him Kamat on his final state or calling for any help. She felt that, even though Kamat is her good friend, people will not believe that; instead they will frame it to be an illicit relationship. Jaya is afraid that this will rip her from her normal life and so she kept numb about this issue. But she feels guilty about leaving his friend alone to die. This haunts her in various situations, she feels guilty and gets dreams about Kamat staring at her or asking questions on different things. In all her deeds and confusions she always remembers Kamat and thinks of him or like him at different crucial situations.

I must not laugh..... Mohan stared at me in horror (That Long Silence, P.122)

Jaya keeps silent to whatever Mohan asks; this silence irritates Mohan to the core. Mohan thinks that Jaya is insulting him because he has lost his job. There are lots of arguments over the attitudes of Jaya after coming to the home in Bombay and these attitudes frames a negative image of her in front of Mohan. Because of this changes and the fear of the present condition she is getting haunted by many faults she did in the past. The routines of each day both the inner and outer silence starts to haunt her in her dreams. At times she cannot differentiate the reality from her thoughts. Jaya keeps silent to the entire question Mohan asks, and Mohan mistakes it as her negligence and fights with her at times. One day when Mohan was seriously discussing the future Jaya abruptly laughs at Mohan, Jaya's attitude enrages Mohan's anger, and he leaves the house suddenly.

I could not control myself any longer the laughter grew louder. (That Long Silence, P.175)

Jaya has sent her children with her friend Rupa's family for a tour. Jaya thought that all the problems would get resolved before they come back and they will not know about the issue. When the situation gets worse she loses her control, her self – confidence shatters. Jaya's belief in maintaining a perfect family and being an ideal wife smashes in front of her. To make the situation worse, she gets a call from her friend Rupa that Rahul (Jaya's son) is missing. The entire case gets worse; she also dreams that Mohan leaves

abruptly and she runs at the back of him. Suddenly she stands at a bus stop. At the bus stand, she sees a girl of her daughter's age who holds with two boys, the boys touch her at various parts of her body, and she stays still. Without noticing the boy's actions, the girl is fighting with one of the boys for a cigarette. Jaya tries to warn the girl, but she never listens to her. All the people in the bus stand turn deaf to her warnings. Later the boys and the girl altogether start to laugh at her. Jaya keeps shouting at the boys to leave her alone and wakes from the sleep.

Mukta (the widow) Jaya's neighbour, consoles her to calm down and explains her the past events. Jaya decides to go out in search of her son, and on the road, she got drenched in the rain and collapsed on the way. After Mukta's explanation, she realises what happened. Her desire to meet her children and stop her husband from leaving home has reflected in her dreams. Jaya falls ill after this incident.

Take your pain between your teethhere we go together at last – Jaya and Kusum. (That Long Silence, P.125)

Jaya without Mohan's knowledge aborts her third child with the help of her elder brother. She never reveals that to Mohan at any situation, and she hears the cries of the child at night in her dreams and those cries in her dreams haunt her. All the deeds she did without Mohan's knowledge haunts her. Jaya was looking after one of her cousin Kusum (a mentally challenged woman). No one knows what made her insane. She lives with Jaya all the time. Only Jaya looks after her well, even when people accuse and makes fun of her. Jaya has to leave Kusum at their relative's house only when she decides to move to Dhadar house. After some days Jaya heard that Kusum's insanity crosses the limit and she commits suicide. When Mohan leaves Jaya's thoughts starts to haunt her, she begins to think and dream about Kusum. Jaya feels Kusum inside her; she hears the voice of Kusum in her dreams. Kusum laughs at Jaya and says that all of her family members left Jaya as her family moved her. This makes Jaya think that she has become insane. Jaya later consoles herself that Kusum is crazy, but she is still sane and can change the mishaps.

Each Relationship, always imperfect, survives on hope (The Binding Vines, P.141)

Mukta explains to Jaya that she saw Jaya living Kamat's house and enquires whether that guilt haunts Jaya till then. Mukta explains that no one will scold or blame her for Kamat's death. Mukta says that Kamat is already suffering from deadly disease and he is afraid to die alone; she adds that Kamat already informed her about his death and it is not Jaya's fault and consoles her. Later Jaya thinks over all the problems she undergoes till then and tries to figure out all the happening in her life. Jaya was afraid of her life before; she was worried that if she argues or discusses or talks against Mohan's wish, it will problem in the family. She felt terrible and was afraid that she would never go back to the life she was living with Mohan at church gatehouse. The perfect family life she preferred, but she believes that everything has its start and an end. Jaya thinks that their problem will also come to an end one day and she turns confident and decides to trust on her life once again.

Jaya decides to write her life events from the scrap; she writes all the events that happen in her life. She never misses any character that helped her to change in her life; she talks about every person who moulded her. This time she never loses mentioning the role of Kamat in her life. Jaya explains the role of every person clearly in the story she writes. At this time she thinks of her father and his unpublished poetry, all the kakas mentioned his writing as a failure because it is not published. But Jaya only thinks of the words she saw in her father's diary after his death, and it says 'Do as you desire'. It means that she has to decide what she has to do in her life. Jaya chooses wisely at last. Jaya decides that she will talk back and give her suggestions on all the things Mohan discusses with her. Jaya decides that she will no longer be the mind reader of Mohan and will answer him as per wish. Instead, she will discuss the do and don't open with her husband. Jaya decides to take part in all the responsibilities of her family.

CONCLUSION

Jaya, right from the beginning due to fear of failures, she never attempts anything. One of the things she never tries on the fear of failure is to take part in the critical decisions and the responsibilities of the family. Jaya thinks herself as the bull in the bullock cart; it is the duty of the beast to follow the other for the safety of the vehicle. To lead the family peacefully, Jaya decides to keep silent to whatever Mohan says and does. This leads the family to leave their house from church gatehouse and move to the Dhadar flat in Bombay. Mohan's job is under the crisis because of the misleading of his M.D. Jaya keeps silent even at this situation. When Jaya and Mohan enter the Dhadar flats, the silence of Jaya starts to haunt her. The patient desires, confusions and longings take shape in her dreams.

Jaya runs for help to Kamat and realises that he is dead. Even though he is gone, she searches him in various situations. This search continues even in her dreams. Jaya's silence of not revealing her grief on Kamat's death is also another reason for her condition. All the misdeeds of her life and untold truth and

unrevealed desires unveil in the dreams of Jaya which makes her insane for some time. All her suppressed desires take shape in her goals in the form of Kamat, Kusum and her unborn child. The longing to meet her daughter and the thought about their safety reveals when she dreams about the boys' misconduct with a girl in the bus stand. Jaya first decides to be silent but later realises that her silence is the major problems for all the mishaps in her life and decides to discuss everything with her husband. Jaya is not afraid of failure; she understands that family is built with both the male and female member of the family. Jaya decides that after that she will not be the mirror of Mohan's mind instead she will stand as a person and will convey her views without any fear; she will no longer be the mute spectator in her family.

We don't change overnight..... Life always has to be made possible (That Long Silence, P. 193)

Jaya realises that life is not the perfect picture we see in advertisements. Life is full of adventures and surprises, and we have to live it. Jaya knows that she cannot change anything within a day. Jaya knows that it may even take days, months or even years to bind things back into shape, but she decides to fight this time. She decides to break her silence and speak out her views also if it goes wrong, and she decides to face the consequences. Jaya decides that she will no more be the mirror for her husband's thoughts. When Mohan returns, she is sure that she will discuss the pros and cons of all the past events. Jaya is confident that his participation in all the family decisions will help all her family members. Jaya understands the consequences and cons of her silence, and now she is bold enough to break her silence for the betterment of her future.

Thus it is clear that the adverse decision does affect the woman physically and psychologically. The decision to remain silent at all the situations creates great havoc in Women's life. This silence creates inexpressible desires and here Jaya's many desires do reflect in each dream of hers. All her thoughts and hauntings represent the many and suppressed desires of her heart. The only remedy for this is to speak out the problem. Whether the problems solved or not, we will not be guilty enough about not discussing the issue. Suppressing thoughts will lead us to suffer. The only solution is to discuss the mind's desire with the people whom we trust.

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