



Masculinity in *That Long Silence*

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Abstract : That long silence is the novel of Shashi Deshpande, In the novel male superiority indicates the patriarchal culture in the marriage of Jaya and her husband Mohan. Marriage converted into frustration, discard as there was the superiority of a male character Mohan, that effected directly to Jaya. So, there are many reasons of male superiority in this novel. Objective of this paper is to explore theory of Masculinity through the main character Mohan and justify the reasons of male superiority. This paper explores different critics and their different ideas on Masculinity.

Keywords: Masculinity, Conjugal life, Dominance, Gender discrimination.

IndexTerms - Component,formatting,style,styling,insert.

INTRODUCTION

Shashi Deshpande is a novelist and short story writer of Indian English literature whose work centers around women's life especially Indian middle class modern women and their problems, their life in modern Indian society, that dilemma after marriage. Her Sahitya Academy award winning novel *That Long Silence* concerned with the idea of the Indian middle class women and her dilemma. A deeply rooted Indian middle class educated woman Jaya who is at the cross lines between tradition and modernity after her conjugal life.

This research paper deals with the idea of masculinity, and how middle class Indian men mentality works with their conjugal life, with their women and how it affects them, in the modern world, how Indian morals and mentality for marriage works. it represents masculinity and how it is causing women, with the reference of Deshpande's *That Long Silence* revolves around Jaya and Mohan who belong to a middle class Indian Brahmin family. The novel shows the position of Indian women and their alienation, their struggle to find their identity and their differences with husband, because in modern age there was a period when women started thinking about themselves and they started speaking freely about their life and their rights. It was a revolutionary period and at that time how Indian men's mentality works with this revolution. Jaya is an educated woman but not free from patriarchal dominance. Mohan is materialistic and chauvinist, he wants to consider himself as the sole bread winner and the head of the family so the novel could directly be assigned to male domination, but there are always two sides of story and this research tries to explain another side of the story of the novel; What are the reasons behind male domination? How masculinity works? It is a contribution to bring the idea of negative masculinity and how it affects the main characters Jaya and Mohan and other minor characters.

There are various studies and research that have been conducted on this novel as a concept of the state of desolation to self-recognition, alienation, Identity crisis, feminist perspective etc. this paper aims to contribute in highlighting negative masculinity and Indian middle class morality and values, their mentality and how it affects Jaya and other women characters, Mohan and other male characters, their marriage life.

Morality indicates the extent to which patriarchy is deep rooted in the culture and mentality of the family (Shyamla 2). This paper defends women suppression with different perspective through masculinity and its negative effects and how it works on women with the help of the concept of masculinity, that raises discussion about men power and change relation among masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity explains men's power over women in subordination. concept of masculinity, that raises discussion about men power and change relation among masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity explains men's power over women in subordination.

NEED OF THE STUDY.

In the study of gender discrimination in literary area of English literature there are many interpretations and contestations from postmodern theorists in English literature, critics, queer theory, sociology, psychology and post structuralist's. The rise of the second wave feminist movement is the impetus for studies on masculinity. The idea of How does the Indian middle-class mentality function? is the main concern of this paper. There are studies which have been conducted on the masculinity in literature. Masculinity refers to what it means to be a man a defined by specific socio-cultural contexts (Gennrich 63).

Masculinity reflects social and cultural expectations of social behaviour rather than biology.

There are different types of masculinities.

1. Hegemonic Masculinity
2. Other Masculinities. As per Morell's identification about masculinities, there are three other masculinities.

1 Complicit Masculinity which includes those who are aware of the traits and characteristics, both positive and negative, of hegemonic masculinity 2. Subordinate masculinity and 3. Marginal masculinity shares numerous traits described to Hegemonic masculinity. and 4. Toxic Masculinity.

There are researches which talk about masculinities in different perspectives, how it affects men and women in different ways. Masculinities only concern with the depth of a man's perception. Masculinity is associated with aggression, power, competitiveness, ambition, courage, physical strength. Manhood is not the manifestation of an inner essence it is socially constructed (Kimmel 120) Construction of masculinity in India is particularly based on their roots, culture and tradition. Real men should be able to prove their masculinity with their own ways and Kimmel says that all masculinities are not equal (Shyamala 1). Each nation has its own idea and a model of masculinity. They are unique to different groups of people.

The paper is about the idea of masculinity and how it affects women. Taking the reference of Shashi Deshpande's novel *That Long Silence*, a feminist novel talking about the protagonist's dilemma of finding self-identity within the patriarchal society and how it affects her married life. The reason of Mohan's mentality towards his wife, a deep-rooted middle class morals, and how it affects to Jaya and which are the reasons behind it. Mohan is involved in a swindle and is forced to move away from his house till the case is resolved, he was involved in corruption, tenders and commissions in his office. Jaya, his wife, is not satisfied with him and their marriage life. She is a failed writer who is haunted by the memories of the past differences. Her husband's reputation is questioned. Here through Mohan the researcher chooses to talk about masculinity, He exercises hegemonic masculinity.

According to Connell the concept of 'Hegemony' deriving from Antonio Gramsci's analysis of class relations, refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life (Connell 3). Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell 80). The hegemonic definition of manhood is a man in power, a man with power, and a man of power (Kimmel 125)

The power of a man can suppress women. In *that long silence* we can examine through male protagonist and another minor characters of men. We see that Mohan is a middle-class man with the rigid mentality, Indian middle class families have shown that one of the ways to specify gender expectations is a clear division between what boys and girls should do. For example, men have jobs outside and a male is the main structure of the family. And Mohan thinks in this way, where as Jaya is somehow different. Mohan believes that he has the power to control his family, because according to him, and according to Indian mentality that financial responsibility of the house is on man's head. Mohan had managed to get the job. I bandaged my eyes tightly, I didn't want to know anything it was enough for me that we moved to Bombay that we could send Rahul and Rati to good schools to send home many to his father for Sudha's fees, Vasant's clothes and Sudha's marriage. (Deshpande 61,62).

It can be seen here that Mohan handles the financial condition of his own family and his parents, like most Indian middle class men. Man, was an absentee landlord at the home and an absent father with his children, devoting himself to his work in an increasingly homosocial environment. In Indian families the man is an authorized person, who takes all the decisions for his family. The family, therefore, is the follower.

Like Vanita mami who advised Jaya when she got married to Mohan that remember Jaya, a husband is like a sheltering tree, without tree you are dangerously unprotected and vulnerable (Deshpande 32). Therefore, Somehow women also provoke other women with the idea of male power. Since childhood men are taught to be strong, capable, reliable, in control. They should protect their family. The society portrays men with their own cultural condition. The very definitions of manhood we have developed in our culture maintain the power that some men have over other men and that men have over women (Kimmel 125). Here Mohan has the power over Jaya. When a man is pressurized in his jobs, or in outer world, dominated by other superiors and they dominate their subordinates. In the market man derives his identity entirely from his success, manhood rooted in the sphere of production, the public arena, a masculinity grounded not in landownership or in artisanal republican virtue but in successful participation in marketplace competition (Kimmel 122). Masculinity must be proved. when there was something going wrong in Mohan's work place, there was some fault that had been done by Mohan, because of his own seek, for his family. I did it for you, for you and the children (Deshpande 10). Because he was very dutiful son, dutiful husband and father. He did because he wanted to serve good life to Jaya and his children. He wanted to prove his masculinity by providing a good life to his family. He is aware about the competition in the world.

But because of this they got into trouble and he was involved in a swindle. hence he should move away from the house to another residence, till the case get resolved without consulting with Jaya. He exercises Hegemonic masculinity, manhood is constructed through differences with women. Mohan takes Jaya for granted, Jaya does not want to shift and she was unaware with this fact.

He has his plan ready. 'We'll stay in the Dadar flat for some time. I remember now that he has assumed I would accompany him, had taken for granted may acquiescence in his plans (Deshpande 11). Here we see that power of the male Patriarchy that over the women, he never thought for once to talk with her. He decided that Jaya needs to follow without questioning. He believed that he is powerful to protect this family and he should prove his masculinity that he can take decision without asking anybody.

Our culture's definition of masculinity is thus several stories at once. It is about the individual man's quest to accumulate those cultural symbols that denote manhood, signs that he has in fact achieved it. It is about the differential access that different types of men have to those cultural resources that confer manhood and about how each of these groups then develop their own modifications to preserve and claim their manhood (Kimmel 125). Here Mohan has complete control over the family, according to Indian morality women have to follow the dictates of their husbands without questioning. When Mohan asked to cut Jaya's hair, he had said one day, looking at me intently, critically, 'cut your hair up to here', so in few days I had cut my hair up to here like Mehra's wife (Deshpande 96). So, Mohan is performing Hegemonic masculinity with Indian culture and mentality and here Jaya is the victim of his power over her because Mohan wants to see Jaya by his choice, so he asks her to cut her hair, because he wanted there are many incidences that shows how Mohan is showing his power upon Jaya.

As Indian middle class morality, some of the typical stereotypes that are associated with boys are that, they should be active, aggressive and assume leadership. Since boys have to play major responsibilities in their families when they grow up, they must be prepared for those role, since childhood and girls on the other hand they should be beautiful, affectionate. They are trained not to challenge discrimination, subordination, exploitation at various levels in the system. There is a scene when Jaya was describing the mentality of her family and Mohan on cooking. Cooking clearing up had been exclusive female operation. Why can't the boys do it? And when Jaya asked Mohan that why don't you do the cooking today? You want me to cook? Mohan had smiled (Deshpande 81). I should have seen the connection then between Mohan's smile and the laughter of all those women in Aji's house (Deshpande 81).. So here there is a kind of partition of male and female duties. Boys don't cook, they can't clear and helping their women, because these are only for women. It is called masculinity as homophobia where overriding emotion is fear. 'Boys don't cry'. Their real fear is not fear of women but of being ashamed or humiliated in front of other men, or being dominated by, they are afraid they are not as mainly as they pretend that they are (Kimmel 131).. When Jaya wanted to work, he had not given her permission. And then he asked 'Why don't you take up a job?'. But you never wanted me to, that time when i wanted to try my hand at teaching ... Oh, that was different. ! Circumstances were different then (Deshpande 95). here a power of suppression without his permission she can't do a job, because he doesn't want to.

Again, the power and pride of a man is seen., Jaya gave up her writing because of him. Jaya has won a prize, for her story, but he was not happy 'How can you reveal us? how can you reveal our lives to the world in this way?' (Deshpande 143). So here again how male ego is constraint by Mohan and Mohan had assumed that Jaya has described their story in her writing, and because of this Jaya has started blaming herself and stop writing. Feminist women have theorized that masculinity is about the drive for domination, the drive for power, for conquest.

The father is the first man who evaluates the boy's masculine performance, the first pair of male eyes before whom he tries to prove himself (Kimmel 125). Those eyes will follow him for the rest of his life other men's eyes will join them. The eyes of role models such as teachers, coaches, bosses or media heroes, the eyes of peers, friends, and the eyes of millions of other men living and dead, from whose constant scrutiny of his performance. He will never be free (Kimmel 130). Mohan was constantly conscious about his image, when Jaya's story was out in magazine, his reputation in male group how it effects.. That is why he was assuming that the story which Jaya has written is about their life but it was not true.

Within the dominant culture, the masculinity that defines white, middle class early middle aged, heterosexual men is the masculinity that sets the standards for other men, against which others are measured (kimmel 125).

Example, a young, married, white, urban, northern heterosexual, protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight and height and recent record in sports. Every American tends to look out upon the world from this perspective. Any male who fails to qualify in any one of these ways is likely to view himself as unworthy, incomplete and inferior (Kimmel 125).

In Indian middle class there is also same kind if mentality, any male who fails to qualify in any one of those ways is likely to view himself as unworthy and incomplete for the society. If it is seen in Mohan, there was a past scene when Jaya's *kakas* and *kakis*, her many brothers talk about her marriage with Mohan they were describing Mohan's personality to Jaya that he had cleared his target, he's quite good looking and he has a good career, hardworking, ambitious from a good Brahmin family.

He'll be good to you, keep you in order, bare you, he seems very decent chap, soft spoken and quiet male. He's independent and he has a good job, as junior engineer in the new steel plant, he's fair than Jaya (Deshpande 92). Here it is seen that the men should have some good quality because they have to be qualified, good looking they must be able to take care of their family because they are the pillar of the family and they have to protect their family and if they don't have that quality then they won't be able to justify their manhood, according to that statement in masculinity as power relation where Michael S Kimmel talks about the idea of masculinity and according to Indian morals also men has to be in the structure of their tradition and culture, what society has decided or created for them because masculinity is structured by social phenomenon and based on cultures where they belong. Masculinity keeps changing by different society and their rules. Our culture's definition of masculinity is this several stories at once. It is about the individual men's quest to accumulate those cultural symbols that denote manhood (Kimmel 125).

There are some minor characters they are also a victim of the male powers in the novel. Jaya's father in law, he was very rude man and Mohan always hated him. Mohan's mother always waited for his father but she had never got any intimation from him about his home coming. She was preparing food for him, he wanted his rice fresh and hot from a vessel that was untouched, She had just finished this second cooking and was waiting, hoping perhaps that he would not be too late (Deshpande 35).

He came in and went straight to the bathroom to wash, she had his plate read 'why is there no fresh chutney today' the next moment he picked up his heavy brass plate and threw it at the wall, here we can use this statement '(Deshpande 35). Man in power, a man with power, and a man of power that men have over women. There is a power of masculine man over women, that we can see here through Mohan's father.

Mohan and Jaya were listening to the same thing that was a conversation between lovers, but no there was not a conversation it was one sided a man was constantly asking a question, with anger open your mouth, you bitch tell me where you went speak. Tell me where you went. Damn you, speak before I smash all your bones. (Deshpande 57).

This was a power of a men, and his dominance over his lover or wife that we can see through this examples, there are so many examples of power in this novel. Society made them to be, what they are today, if they are a men a real men they should follow the tradition of their gender. how society indicates them to follow the tradition that wife should wait for their spouse until they came home for dinner or lunch, after than they can eat. Wife has to ask permission for everything whatever they wanted to do and because of this power women are accordingly trained, how they should or have to follow some rules after their marriage. They have to be a good caring wife holds all her responsibilities as a wife a mother for their family, we see that in the novel *Vanita Mami* constantly an example of how women are habituated with male power. She was giving married life advice to Jaya that how she behave with their husband. The duties of a woman are taught at an early age and the wife has to dutifully obey the customs. Mohan was exercising complete control over the family over Mohan's father and some minor characters.

Here there was a character during Jaya's marriage, she develops a relationship with *Mr. Kamat* who exercises liberal masculinity. A liberal masculine is one who realizes that every individual has the right to live by equal standards (Shyamala 3) he was interested in Jaya's hidden talent as a writer.

Manda's father beats up his wife Tara because she does not provide the income for his drinks. Men who belong to lower income group they are subordinate themselves. The rejection of feminine behaviour suppression of a women and less powerful men contributes to the development of masculinities. This behaviour also proves man's superiority over woman and of his ranking among true masculine nature.

There are so many reasons on male dominance, masculinity, and their power over woman, in this novel. And how it is causing Jaya and other female character. Jaya was a kind of woman who is educated and understands her rights. What is right for her and what not, but she was also the victim of a power and male superiority, and its effects on her in so many ways. Jaya was frustrated by her seventeen-year-old marriage life, she became a puppet in her marriage life. She can feel the suppression and power over her by Mohan because she has gained contrast treatment in her own house. When she used to argue or express opinions over issues and her family would comply with her ideas, here with Mohan it was she feels completely opposite. Mohan never asks for her opinions, whenever he needed, take some important decision for family. She feels like she does not have her own identity, she is someone's wife, someone's mother but she doesn't have her own identity. A complete dominance of Mohan: She had cut her hair because Mohan wanted to see her in short hair. She stops writing because of Mohan as he is providing all the necessity for the family, but for Jaya she needs an internal love and support when she writes stories in magazine.

So, here we can see that what it feels throughout the novel. She could not take her decision by herself, it was like she was in a cage. For her Mohan always decides what she has to do or not to do. There are so many things we can relate through Jaya that it is man power and she is the object of the power. When Mohan left his house, and live her alone without informing her, Jaya started blaming herself for this.

Conclusion

In the conclusion, this paper is about to contribute in highlighting the idea of masculinity and Indian middle-class mentality. It effects on women's life, directly through their power, dominance, and superiority, with the reference of main characters of the novel Jaya and Mohan. In this paper he is representing hegemonic masculinity. Paper is highlighting first the definition of masculinity. And, how Mohan exercises his masculinity power over Jaya. Paper shows the effects of Indian middleclass mentality. deep rooted culture and how it effects on Mohan and Jaya's life. with the various examples from the novel and try to connect with the theory of masculinity, through different critics like Connel, kimmel etc . and try to bring the new idea of how masculinity is still causing women in 20th century. The objective of this paper is to contribute the power of man over woman. and how deeply get effected and react to situation, we can see through the novel.

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