

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the portrayal of female protagonists in Everything Happens for a Reason and Difficult Daughters, I would like to draw some conclusions. The protagonist in Kavita Daswani's Everything Happens for a Reason is Priya Sohni. Some of her characteristics remain the same from the beginning until the end of story. Throughout the story, Priya Sohni is portrayed as a smart and dutiful woman. However, she also experiences a change of characteristic because of her awareness of her own rights. In contrast, all characteristics of the protagonist in Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters, Virmati, remain the same from the beginning until the end of the story. She is portrayed as a smart, rebellious and impulsive person.

In the beginning, Priya Sohni is portrayed as an obedient person. As a woman and the youngest sister of four siblings, she has to be an obedient daughter. She cannot refuse when her parents decide for her arranged marriage with a man whom she has not known before. Moreover, after she is married, she has to obey to her husband's family. Living in Los Angeles, she has to adapt not only to her new family but also to her new society which is different

from India. She becomes a good and dutiful wife and daughter-in-law. One day, she gets rare opportunity to be a journalist. She decides to take the opportunity because she has passion for journalism although her husband' family does not agree. Her education and experiences cause her to be a critical person who questions many things. It changes her submissive characteristic into a rebellious one.

Then, I find the most dominant characteristic of Virmati, the protagonist Difficult Daughters, is rebellious. She has shown her rebellions since she was still a youth. It can be seen from her actions, such as, demanding to get education, postponing her arranged marriage to her fiance to finish her school, asking her parents to cancel her arranged marriage, trying to commit suicide, and deciding to marry a married man. All of these happen because there are a lot of restrictions for women. Virmati is a woman who has a great passion to make her dream come true; yet, there are a lot of limitations which prevent her to do what she wants. Thus, there is no other way for her except to break them. She also shows her seriousness by trying to kill herself. She hopes that her death would make her surroundings believe she is serious.

After analyzing the portrayal of the female protagonists in Everything Happens for a Reason and Difficult Daughters, I can conclude that both of them write about women. I agree with what Priya has done. She dares to take the risk to actualize her aspiration although she has to confront her husband's family. She does not change into a rebellious one suddenly. She experiences a process which opens her mind and makes her aware of her position as a woman. She realizes that she cannot be a follower of her husband forever. She proves that women deserve

to develop their talent and to be considered equal to men. Although Priya becomes a rebel, she changes into a better woman. She rebels by doing positive things and advancing in her career.

I also admire Virmati's courage to actualize her dreams. She dares to do something which is still rare for women in her era, namely to take a risk and oppose society to do what they want. She is eager for education. She is open to new things. She knows that education is beneficial not only for men but also for women. She learns from other women's life around her. They are busy with the household matters without ever thinking about themselves. Therefore, she wants to be educated in order to have a better life. She wishes that she can voice her thoughts and do what she wants.

Through the two characters, both authors reveal the struggle of women to show their existence in society. Priya and Virmati are strong women and that is how women should be when they are under a lot of restrictions. Both of them demonstrate that women can actualize their wishes. The protagonists also show that women can do something to have a better life, such as to have an occupation. This would make society admit women's existence and they would also appreciate women.

The matter which differentiates Priya Sohni and Virmati's struggle is their eras. Priya Sohni lives in twentieth century; while, Virmati lives in ninetieth century. The different setting of time influences how hard their struggle. It is more difficult for Virmati to show and have her existence when women existence is still uncommon at her time. Whereas, it is easier for Priya Sohni because she lives in the era where a lot of people admit the women existence.

From both novels, I learn about women's struggle. A lot of women surrender when they are prohibited to achieve their dreams; however, the protagonists inspire me not to be a desperate person. They teach me that women have the same right as men to decide for themselves. Women are not only the followers of their husbands but they are equal to their partners. They also have the right to decide, especially if it concerns her family. So, when a woman feels that she is too dominated by others, she has to stand up for herself.

I also learn that a woman can be smart or successful. However, she is still a woman by nature. She has to obey to the norms in the society or in her own family. I think a successful or smart career woman can not abandon her duty as a daughter, wife, mother, or daughter-in-law. Moreover, a married woman should be successful in her career and in her family as well. She has to be able to divide her time between working outside the house and taking care of her family. Besides, she has to be able to give quality time for her family.

Then, I get a motivating idea about education. Education is very important for everyone. Like men, women also have to have education. An illiterate married woman has to rely on her husband. She could only take care of the household matters and most probably she will be dominated by her husband. That is why a woman also has to go to school. She will be educated and be able to have an occupation outside the house. If something wrong happens with her marriage, she can be an independent person. She can earn her own money. She can support herself and her children.

In my opinion, the purpose of the authors is achieved. Nowadays, there are a lot of Indian women who are passionate about education. They are equal to men

and can even compete with them. They fulfill their duty in their family consistently and still work outside the house. Besides, I believe that Priya Sohni and Virmati are not merely fictional figures. They are inspired from actual people in the society. We know that the patriarchal system and arranged marriages are not only found in India. Other ethnic groups have the same practices. However, women must be able to struggle for their rights to be equal to men.