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Digital hearts: A youthful journey through love and identity in love @ Facebook by Nikita Singh

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Abstract

Nikita Singh (born October 6, 1991) is famous as India's leading romance writer. All her novels deal with contemporary themes and rising trends. At the same time, it will also bring into light how these rising trends have become an inseparable part of our lives. Readers witness the modern ways being adopted very easily in all of her novels. At the age of eighteen, she wrote juvenile fiction and her very first book, Love @ Facebook (2011), which became a best-seller. The fiction is easily relatable, akin to neighborhood stories. The goal of this research paper is to investigate virtual romance in the digital age. The love triangle that forms between Ankit, Ronit, and Vatsala will be highlighted, illustrating how the current generation's romantic preferences are evolving. The research paper will also explore the ways in which social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter impact the younger generation.

Keywords: Romance, virtual, digital, young adult, Facebook

Introduction

Nikita Singh has written famous bestseller novels like The Reason is you (2019), Every Time It Rains (2017), Like a Love Song (2016), The Promise and After All This Time (2010), Letters to My Ex (2018). She has also edited an anthology of stories entitled 25 Strokes of Kindness. In 2011, she joined Grapevine India as an editor and signed a contract with Penguin Books India. While pursuing her studies in pharmacy at the age of nineteen, she wrote her first book, Love @ Facebook. In the young adult novel Love @ Facebook (2011), a nineteen-year-old girl befriends a VJ on Facebook and eventually falls in love with him. Nikita Singh informs us in a very unfavorable way that we have become contingent on the huge social networking site "Facebook" and that it has become an integral part of our lives in her novel Love @ Facebook. It all began with a "Friend request" button. One Saturday night, a girl, bored, turns the channels and finds herself watching a random MTV TV show hosted by a handsome young man. She finds him on Facebook out of curiosity and ultimately sends him a friend request. The author depicts a young teenager who is jumbled about her feelings about whom she loves. The research study is to find out the disturbed psychology of the youths due to social media presented in a form of virtual romance.

Materials and Methods

The researcher will use critical and analytical methods for finding the facts. The study will be based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources will be the original texts and secondary sources will be the books, research articles and material available in the libraries and on the internet. The novel selected for the research is Love @ Facebook 9 (2011) by Nikita Singh ^[1].

Results

Love @ Facebook is excellent illustrations of commercially erotic literature, and the writer herself is a model of a prosperous literary entrepreneur who devotes her time to writing and reaps financial rewards. Singh successfully offers a brief and pleasant delight in this novel because the novel is primarily intended for today's youth and incorporate emotional elements with ease. So, for the readers it is simple which can be read and forget without even trying to remember anything.

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Discussion

In September 2011, the sequel to Singh's *Love @ Facebook, Accidentally In Love. With Him? Again?* Was published. Compared to *Love @ Facebook*, the novel is intended for an older readership. If it's not forever... Its *Not Love* was released in February 2012. The book is based on the actual event known as the September 7, 2011, Delhi High Court Blast. The book's main character was present when the explosion occurred. He chooses to follow a love story written in a half-burned diary that he finds. She has also spoken on various TEDx conferences in colleges and top business schools across India.

Singh's novels have presented unique themes to her readers. *Right Here, Right Now* is about a woman losing her memory, while *After All This Time* describes a character who is HIV positive. *Right Here Right Now* follows the new life of a senile in an identity crisis. Like *A Love Song* tells an engaging tale of a disturbed adolescent. *Every Time It Rains* addresses the long-lasting psychological harm brought on by domestic violence. *Letters to My Ex* examines a broken engagement only via the correspondence that ensues. The 2019 film *The Reason Is You* examines the limitations of conventional relationships as well as grieving and getting over a loss. *What Do You See When You Look in the Mirror?* (2021), her most recent book, explores the hidden inner lives of her characters as they struggle with mental health, love, loss, and grief.

Nowadays, everyone aspires to be a star! These days, living a typical, comfortable, and contented life is insufficient. Facebook's current success provides the Stars with an incredible platform to feel like stars. Nineteen-year-old Vatsala Rathore falls in love with Ronit Oberoi, a VJ and aspiring actor, on Facebook. The innocent first crush quickly turns into love, which is quickly followed by obsession. How could it not, when the breathtakingly beautiful Star returns the favor with equal curiosity? What with all the fans on the social networking site going crazy over them!

The plot of *Love @ Facebook* revolves around Vatsala, an independent woman who enjoys socializing with her closest friends, Ankit and Jaanvi. Vatsala is just like any other small-town girl, but not like the typical girls; she enjoys fast racing cars and is proud to be a citizen of Ranchi, where Dhoni resides. Vatsala is spotted having a good time with her pals at the canteen and on her college campus. For the past four years, Ankit Rai, a master of selflessness, has been enamored of Vatsala. Will Vatsala, though, finally notice? Vatsala is in possession of two. Will she ever be able to choose the person who is right for her?

The characterization of the novel makes it appealing. Any female can fall in love with Ankit. He is your go-to guy in case of any difficulties because of his good looks, intelligence, and sincerity. Despite being immature at times, the audience finds Vatsala's character endearing. She has significant boy trouble and an unending state of confusion, which is what most modern girls deal with. The concept of *Love @ Facebook* has become ingrained in the lives of today's youth due to the growing number of relationships that are forged online and the growing number of people who use the social media platform for leisure.

The chat narratives that these writers have created are almost like epistolary pieces of writing of Jane Austen or the Bronte sisters, or other writers of the Victorian era. In addition to providing a break from the tedious narrations,

these conversational tales act as a link between the readers and the fictional characters. Readers can peek into the characters' private lives through these little conversational tales. The important aspect of these narratives is how well the character's psyche is revealed with relatively little in the way of words or space. The social media conversations that are a part of Nikita Singh's writings provide a vivid, all-encompassing view of the female characters' thought processes. Vatsala expresses her restlessness as a result of her social media addiction and her attempts to find love and happiness there:

So out of fear dying of boredom, I logged into my Facebook account. Owing to stroke of good luck I was having that day, none of friends were online. Not a single person out of fifty-four friends on FB. (*Love @ Facebook*, p.168)

The author wants to highlight a new kind of storytelling through virtual conversations in the virtual space. She wants the readers to understand major characters like Vatsala, Ronit, Ankit and Jaanvi through their virtual communication. The way this virtual world is portrayed in the literature combines augmented reality with the characters' actual emotions to create a script. It's intriguing to draw the conclusion that the story settings' paradigm shift represents a modern age while maintaining India's magnificent and diverse landscapes.

Singh depicts the themes like conflict and emotional hardships that her characters deal with in both their personal and professional lives. She frequently explores their motivations, feelings, and thoughts in great detail, providing readers with an intimate look into their minds. Many young and amateur novelists have been encouraged to try their hand at writing Indian English fiction by authors such as her. About *Love @ Facebook* the author herself writes that:

Love @ Facebook is about crushes. And how the crush, if allowed, can turn into madness or obsession, depending upon the level to which you are mentally retarded. And if you are retarded socially and emotionally too. (*Love @ Facebook*, p. 88).

After some passive chains of events, she finally gets the attention of Ronit. On the other hand, a typecast lover Ankit is behind Vatsala for four years. Ankit has every aspect to be her lover, except the celebrity status. But, true love is true. Ankit gets Vatsala in the end and for this to happen the author uses a very popular yet common trick: Vatsala turns down Ronit thinking or assuming him as a bad guy. She starts blaming him for not giving her much attention. Thus, the author tries to present the restlessness of youth who is misled by social media and fake relationships.

In this novel the author paints her subjects and their surroundings in an incredibly calm and simple manner. This causes the readers to become romanticized and lose themselves in her skillfully written work of art. Her sincerity makes the readers' hearts sing, and they yearn for more of her kind of writing. The love triangle is completed by Ankit, an altruistic youngster who has secretly been attracted to Vatsala. By making use of the classic love triangle concept, the author has struck a chord with the younger generation. The fiery romance that comes from this Facebook attraction takes the story forward. *Love @ Facebook (FIC)* is a novel that uses simple and casual language, similar to the language spoken by contemporary youngsters. So it wins the hearts of youths as they can relate themselves to it.

Thus, *Love @ Facebook* is excellent illustrations of commercially erotic literature, and the writer herself is a

model of a prosperous literary entrepreneur who devotes her time to writing and reaps financial rewards. Singh successfully offers a brief and pleasant delight in this novel because the novel is primarily intended for today's youth and incorporate emotional elements with ease. So, for the readers it is simple which can be read and forget without even trying to remember anything.

Conclusion

A novel called Love @ Facebook (FIC) examines how social media sites like Facebook and Twitter affect the modern generation. Teenagers who can prioritize social media sites like Facebook were the target audience for the book. The novel is digital or virtual romance. In a society where upholding a virtual persona is customary, this book demonstrates how a romantic notion can be explored on Facebook. This book, written by Nikita Singh, a young, bestselling author with several published works already, is intended for younger readers.

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