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Human Relationships: A Perspective in the Novels of Jane Austen and Professor Vikas Sharma

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Abstract

The theme of human relationships is the central theme, The novels's of Jane Austen. Her novels provide a long range of character studies, which represent in this way or that human relationships. The present paper depicts the aspects of Jane Austen's representation of human relationships. She represents in her novels a strange mixture of human relationships in a realistic manner. She introduces human relationships between men and women, between husband and wife, between parents and son/daughter, between lover and beloved, between one woman and another etc. Professor Vikas Sharma is an established writer in contemporary India. In the majority of his novels, he has addressed multiple sensitive themes that prevail in our society. As a social writer, he has also presented his philosophy regarding many important developments in modern society. His novel, *Honey Trap*, presents the clash between idealism and materialism in today's world. Through his protagonist, Mangesh, the author attempts to explore the struggles of an idealist who feels stuck in today's materialistic society. He highlights the conflicts between principles and social status. Mangesh starts his life as an idealist and serves society. However, he soon succumbs to materialistic pleasures as his idealism is constantly challenged. Professor Vikas Sharma uses the character of Kuntal to highlight how pervasive materialist values often break idealists. The title of the novel itself is a metaphor for the effects of materialism. This novel is not the personal story of the protagonist; it is a commentary on the broader social structure of modern Indian society that values corruption, consumerism, and ambition over idealism, moral integrity, and principles. This research paper aims to present an analysis of the themes of idealism and materialism in this novel. It explores the central theme of the novel through the experience of the protagonist and highlights the philosophical question raised by the author. The aim of this paper is to depict relationship in the novels of Professor Vikas Sharma and Jane Austen.

Keywords: Perspective, Realistic, Human Relationships, social writer

Introduction

Professor Vikas Sharma is a renowned name among writers in the contemporary era. Over the Years, he has established himself as an accomplished writer who has touched upon major themes in Indian society. As a professor and academican, Professor Vikas Sharma is deeply connected to society and people. Owing to his family history and cultural heritage, he understands the unique fabric of Indian society very well. The same is also evident in all of his novels. Over the span of his career, he has authored over a dozen novels. In these novels, he has addressed many important themes like poverty, class distinction, spiritualism, science fiction, historical development of Indian society, idealism, corruption, women's rights, and many more. His latest creation, *Honey Trap* (2025), also talks about some sensitive issues prevailing in our society. The novel starts from the time of independence and his novels like *Sana* and *Rah ke Patthar* deals with human relationship. Like Prof. Vikas Sharma the novels of Jane Austen also explore human relationships through the lens of romance, family, and social status, often critiquing societal norms around marriage. Her novels focus on the importance of unions built on mutual respect and love, contrasting them with marriages of convenience driven by economic security or social standing. Family dynamics, including parent-child and sibling relationships, provide a crucial backdown for these romantic pursuits, influencing and sometimes conflicting with individual choices. Prof. Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool* is a compelling exploration of the evolving dynamics of love, desire, and relationships in contemporary society. Written during the COVID-19 pandemic, the novel reflects the emotional, social, and psychological struggles of modern life

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and highlights how love often becomes transactional and driven by physical gratification. Through the central character, Richa Pandit, the narrative delves into the complexities of extramarital affairs, casual encounters, and the emotional emptiness that permeates postmodern relationships. The present paper explores the moral ambiguities of modern intimacy and themes such as open relationships, same-sex experiences, and the emotional detachment that defines many contemporary connections. However, amidst these moral ambiguities, the story ultimately advocates for the enduring power of love. Through *Love's Not Time's Fool*, Prof. Sharma offers a bold and unflinching commentary on the complexities of human relationships in a world driven by personal gain and fleeting satisfaction. The novel serves as both a mirror and a critique of modern society while encouraging readers to reflect on the true nature of love and intimacy in their lives.

www.the-criterion.com 065 <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10448030> The Complexities of Love and Desire in Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool* Keywords: Contemporary Relationships, Physical Gratification, Moral Ambiguity, Transactional Love. Prof. Vikas Sharma is a leading voice in Indian English fiction who brings to life the evolving dynamics of love and relationships in his English debut novel *Love's Not Time's Fool*. His writing captures the dilemmas of modern youth and explores their search for success, independence, and emotional fulfilment. In this novel, Prof. Sharma offers a bold portrayal of desire and sexuality which reflects upon the increasingly transactional nature of love in contemporary society. Written during the COVID-19 pandemic, the novel mirrors the social, emotional, and psychological challenges of the time and emphasizes the fluidity and fragility of human connections. The novel's title draws from William Shakespeare's Sonnet 116, which describes love as eternal and steadfast. Love's Not Time's Fool, though rosy lips and cheeks Within his bending sickle's compass come; Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks, But bears it out even to the edge of doom. If this be error and upon me prov'd, I never writ, nor no man, ever loved. (William Shakespeare, Sonnet 116) However, Prof. Sharma uses the title ironically to highlight how modern love often lacks permanence and focuses instead on lust and fleeting encounters. In contrast to Shakespeare's idealized love, *Love's Not Time's Fool* presents a reality where relationships are driven by physical gratification and personal convenience rather than emotional depth or spiritual connection. The Criterion: An International Journal in English Vol. 16, Issue-I, February 2025 ISSN: 0976-8165 The central theme in *Love's Not Time's Fool* is the unquenchable desire for physical satisfaction among the youth. The novelist delves into the complexities of love and portrays it as an emotion frequently overshadowed by lust. At novel's heart lies Richa Pandit, an upper-middle-class woman trapped in a loveless marriage with her husband, Malya Vaidik, a successful businessman in Agra. Their marriage, devoid of warmth and intimacy, mirrors the emotional detachment that plagues many modern relationships. Malya's extramarital affairs, impotence and emotional indifference leave Richa yearning for companionship and understanding. Her unmet emotional needs drive her into the company of Abhilash, a young and ambitious IAS aspirant from a modest background. Their relationship, which begins innocently at a bookstore, gradually evolves into a deeper emotional bond and

ultimately crosses the realm of physical intimacy. The novelist draws attention to the way sexual attraction often overrides social conventions, as seen in scenes where Richa, despite being married, openly surrenders to Abhilash's advances. In one striking moment, Abhilash embraces her in the bathroom, kisses her without hesitation, and Richa reciprocates without shame. This dynamic critiques the fragile boundaries between emotional connection and physical desire and sheds light on the moral complexities of extramarital relationships. A deeper layer of the novel draws a subtle yet powerful comparison between Richa and the Lady of Shalott, a figure from Alfred Lord Tennyson's famous poem. Prof. Sharma weaves this allusion seamlessly into the text and invites readers to reflect on the similarities between Richa and the tragic Lady of Shalott. Like the Lady, Richa is trapped by societal expectations. The line, "One loses one's sense of wisdom due to one's passions." (*Love's Not Time's Fool*, 15) resonates deeply with Richa's character and emphasizes how passion can cloud judgment and drive individuals to break societal norms. This literary parallel between classical literature and contemporary struggles is really commendable which enriches the novel's thematic depth.

Hypotheses

Jane Austen have been regarded as a great novelist of the romantic era, perhaps one of the leading women figures as dealing with the depiction of human relationships as love, friendship and domestic relations like marriage.

My attempt, in this abstract, is to find out whether Austen's novel's really have such stuff or not. This is the hypothetical or a question that is to be solved in this paper.

Research Methodology

In order to complete the proposed research work following resource and research methodology will be employed: - The required information will be obtained from primary sources i.e. novel written by Jane Austen, anthologies, articles in scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines, interviews, thesis and internet sources etc. will be used to obtain the results. To organize the research work coherently help will be taken from MLA handbook for writers of Research paper 10th ed. thought the researchwork. There are various research methods and this research involves combinations of methods such as archival research, discourse analysis and qualitative method and in the end there will be given a conclusion of complete research.

Analysis and Discussion

The celebrated English novelist of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, continues to captivate readers with her keen wit, incisive social commentary, and timeless storytelling. Born in 1775, Austen crafted novels that offer insightful portrayals of the manners, morals, and mores of Regency-era England. Her works, including "*Pride and Prejudice*," "*se and Sensibility*," and "*Emma*," are renowned for their sharp characterizations, astute observations of human nature, and satirical critiques of the societal norms of her time. Austen's narratives often revolve around themes of love, marriage, class, and the pursuit of personal happiness, all set against the backdrop of a society governed by rigid social hierarchies and cultural expectations. With her signature blend of humor, irony, and empathy, Austen created timeless classics that continue to resonate with

readers worldwide, offering profound insights into the complexities of the human condition and enduring relevance across centuries.

Delineation of human relations in the Novels of Jane Austen:

Jane Austen, a renowned English novelist of the 19th century, is celebrated for her insightful portrayal of human relations. Through her timeless works, she offers a captivating exploration of the complexities of societal norms, interpersonal dynamics, and the human heart. With a keen eye for social observation and a sharp wit, Austen crafts narratives that continue to resonate with readers worldwide, illuminating timeless truths about love, marriage, and social hierarchy.

Understanding Human Relations

At the heart of Austen's novels lie intricate webs of human relations, each meticulously depicted with depth and nuance. Her characters navigate a world governed by societal expectations, where social status, class distinctions, and personal integrity intersect to shape their interactions. Through the lens of marriage, courtship, and family life, Austen reveals the subtleties of human behavior, exposing the follies, foibles, and triumphs of her protagonists.

Marriage as a Social Institution

In Austen's novels, marriage serves as a central theme through which she explores the complexities of human relations. With astute insight, she critiques the societal pressures that compel individuals to seek advantageous matches based on wealth, status, or lineage. In "*Pride and Prejudice*," for instance, the characters navigate a world where marriage is often viewed as a means of securing financial stability and social standing. Through the courtship of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, Austen challenges conventional notions of love and marriage, emphasizing the importance of genuine connection and mutual respect.

Interpersonal Dynamics and Social Hierarchy

Austen's novels offer a rich tapestry of interpersonal dynamics within the framework of social hierarchy. From the genteel society of the landed gentry to the aspiring middle class, her characters inhabit a world defined by rigid social distinctions and codes of conduct. Through sharp dialogue and astute observation, Austen exposes the tensions and rivalries that simmer beneath the surface of polite society. Whether it's the scheming of Lady Catherine de Bourgh in "*Pride and Prejudice*" or the matchmaking antics of Emma Woodhouse in "*Emma*," Austen deftly explores the intricacies of power, privilege, and social ambition.

Character Development and Moral Growth

Central to Austen's exploration of human relations is the process of character development and moral growth. Her protagonists undergo transformative journeys, grappling with their own biases, prejudices, and misconceptions. Through trials and tribulations, they emerge wiser and more self-aware, ultimately finding redemption and happiness. In "*Sense and Sensibility*," the Dashwood sisters navigate the pitfalls of romance and heartache, learning valuable lessons about love, loyalty, and resilience. Austen's keen psychological insight shines through in her portrayal of characters who evolve from flawed individuals to moral

exemplars, embodying virtues such as integrity, empathy, and self-restraint. In the novels of Jane Austen, human relations are depicted with subtlety, depth, and wit. Through her timeless narratives, she offers a profound exploration of the complexities of love, marriage, and social etiquette. Austen's enduring appeal lies in her ability to illuminate universal truths about the human condition, inviting readers to reflect on their own lives and relationships. As we journey through the pages of her novels, we are reminded of the enduring power of human connection and the timeless wisdom found in the intricacies of human relations.

#Portrayal of Human Relationships in Indian English Literature

Introduction: Indian English literature encompasses a diverse array of voices, themes, and narratives that offer rich insights into the complexities of human relationships. From the intricacies of family dynamics to the tensions of social hierarchies, Indian English literature reflects the multifaceted nature of interpersonal connections in the Indian context. Through novels, short stories, and poetry, Indian authors explore themes of love, friendship, duty, and identity, shedding light on the diverse tapestry of human experience.

#Familial Bonds and Generational Conflicts: One of the recurring themes in Indian English literature is the portrayal of familial bonds and generational conflicts. Authors delve into the complexities of family relationships, depicting the tensions between tradition and modernity, authority and autonomy. In novels like R.K. Narayan's "*The Guide*" and Arundhati Roy's "*The God of Small Things*," familial ties serve as a backdrop against which characters grapple with issues of identity, belonging, and cultural heritage. Through vivid characterization and evocative storytelling, these works capture the intricacies of family life in India, from the warmth of filial love to the strains of intergenerational discord.

#Love, Romance, and Marriage: Love, romance, and marriage are perennial themes in Indian English literature, offering a lens through which authors explore the complexities of human emotions and relationships. Novels like Vikram Seth's "*A Suitable Boy*" and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "*The Mistress of Spices*" weave intricate tales of love and longing, set against the backdrop of cultural traditions and societal expectations. Through the trials and tribulations of their protagonists, these authors delve into themes of forbidden love, societal barriers, and the quest for personal fulfillment, offering nuanced portrayals of romance in the Indian context.

#Friendship and Camaraderie: Friendship and camaraderie are celebrated in Indian English literature as bonds that transcend social barriers and cultural divides. Authors like Amitav Ghosh, in "*The Shadow Lines*," and Jhumpa Lahiri, in "*The Namesake*," explore the transformative power of friendship in shaping individual identities and forging connections across continents and generations. Through the experiences of their characters, these authors illuminate the universality of human emotions and the capacity for empathy and solidarity, even in the face of adversity.

#Social Hierarchies and Power Dynamics: Indian English literature also grapples with the complexities of social hierarchies and power dynamics, reflecting the realities of caste, class, and gender in Indian society. Authors like Aravind Adiga, in "The White Tiger," and Rohinton Mistry, in "A Fine Balance," expose the injustices and inequalities that pervade Indian society, highlighting the impact of systemic oppression on human relationships. Through the lens of marginalized characters and disenfranchised communities, these authors shed light on the enduring struggle for dignity, agency, and social justice in contemporary India. In Indian English literature, human relationships are portrayed with depth, nuance, and empathy, offering readers a window into the diverse tapestry of Indian society. Through novels, short stories, and poetry, Indian authors explore the intricacies of familial bonds, love and romance, friendship and camaraderie, and the complexities of social hierarchies and power dynamics. As readers journey through the pages of these works, they are invited to reflect on their own experiences and relationships, and to engage with the universal themes of love, loss, hope, and resilience that resonate across cultures and continents.

Dealing of human relationships in Emma

In Jane Austen's novel "*Emma*," the intricate web of human relationships forms the heart of the narrative. At the center of this web is the protagonist, Emma Woodhouse, a young woman with a penchant for matchmaking and meddling in the affairs of others. Throughout the novel, Austen explores the complexities of friendship, family, and romance as Emma navigates the social landscape of Highbury. From her close bond with her father, Mr. Woodhouse, to her friendship with the naive Harriet Smith, Emma's relationships are both endearing and fraught with misunderstandings. However, it is her dynamic with Mr. Knightley, her brother-in-law and trusted confidant that serves as the emotional anchor of the story. Through Emma's journey of self-discovery and growth, Austen offers a nuanced portrayal of human relationships, replete with humor, insight and timeless wisdom. A passionate exposure in *Emma* is as follow.

"If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more."1- (George Knightley)

Persuasion

"*Persuasion*," Jane Austen's final completed novel, delves into the complexities of human relationships with a mature and insightful perspective. Set in the early 19th century, the novel follows the story of Anne Elliot, a woman of integrity and sensitivity who faces the consequences of a decision made eight years earlier: she rejected a proposal of marriage from Captain Frederick Wentworth on the advice of her family. Now, circumstances bring Wentworth back into Anne's life, as he has become a successful naval officer.

At its core, "*Persuasion*" explores the themes of regret, second chances, and the enduring power of love. Anne's internal conflict between her lingering feelings for Wentworth and her sense of duty to her family creates tension and drama throughout the narrative. Through Anne's introspection and growth, Austen offers a poignant portrayal of the complexities of the human heart and the challenges of navigating societal expectations. The novel also delves into the dynamics of family relationships, particularly the influence of Anne's self-absorbed father, Sir Walter Elliot, and her conniving older sister, Elizabeth. Austen skillfully portrays the tensions and rivalries within the Elliot family,

highlighting the impact of vanity, pride, and social status on human interactions. Throughout "*Persuasion*," Austen's keen wit and social commentary shine through, as she satirizes the superficiality of Regency society while also celebrating the virtues of constancy, integrity, and true love. The novel's exploration of human relationships is nuanced and multifaceted, offering readers a rich tapestry of characters and emotions to engage with. Ultimately, "*Persuasion*" stands as a testament to Austen's enduring insight into the human condition and her ability to craft compelling narratives that resonate across generations. Through Anne Elliot's journey of self-discovery and reconciliation, Austen delivers a timeless tale of love, redemption, and the enduring power of the human spirit. The exposure of true love by Captain Wentworth in *persuasion*, is "I can listen no longer in silence. I must speak to by such means as are within my reach. You pierce my soul. I am half agony, half hope. Tell me not that I am too late, that such precious feelings are gone forever. I offer myself to you again with a heart even more your own... I have love it none but you."2

Dealing of human relationships in sense and sensibility

In Jane Austen's "*Sense and Sensibility*," the intricacies of human relationships unfolds against the backdrop of societal expectations and personal struggles. The novel follows the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, as they navigate the complexities of love, loss, and social status. Elinor embodies the qualities of sense, exhibiting restraint and practicality in the face of adversity, while Marianne embodies sensibility, embracing passion and emotion with fervor. Through their contrasting personalities and romantic entanglements, Austen delves into the dynamics of sisterhood, friendship, and romantic love. From the sisters' deep bond with each other to their relationships with suitors such as Edward Ferrars and Colonel Brandon, Austen explores the nuances of trust, loyalty, and betrayal that characterize human interactions. As the Dashwood sisters navigate the challenges of society and matters of the heart, Austen's portrayal of human relationships is marked by sensitivity, insight, and enduring relevance. The revelation of love in *sense and sensibility* is as follow – "It is not time or opportunity that is to determine intimacy; it is disposition alone. Seven years would be insufficient to make some people acquainted with each other, and seven days are more than others."3 –Marianne Dashwood

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