

A study of women characters in Shakespeare's plays with a modern perspective."

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" دراسة لشخصيات النساء في مسرحيات شكسبير بمنظور حديث "

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تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى إبراز أهمية مسرحيات وليام شكسبير في مختلف الأبعاد خصوصاً الشخصيات النسائية. تدور جميع العناصر الرئيسية للدراما مثل الحكمة والترابطات المتداخلة للأحداث بالإضافة إلى هيكل المسرحية بطريقة ما حول أفعال وردود أفعال النساء في أدوارهن الخاصة. كان للممثلين خاصة النساء سمات مميزة تتناسب دورهم في المسرحيات. تم عرض أدوار النساء على الجمهور والقراء والمشاهدين بطريقة تصورهم على أنهم فاعلون واقوياء بغض النظر عما إذا كان دورهم إيجابياً أم سلبياً. ترك دور المرأة في المسرحيات انطباعاً مؤثراً على الحكمة والموضوع الرئيسي للمسرحية. كلمات مفتاحية: أدب، شخصيات نسائية، دراما، تأثير، سمات، مميزات

Abstract:

This research paper intends to bring out that Shakespeare's plays were significant in the dimension especially of women characters. All the main elements of the drama like the plot, the interweaving inter-connections of the events as well as the structure of the play somehow revolved around the actions and reactions of the women in their respective roles. The actors in the drama especially the women had distinct traits which suited their role. The roles of the women were presented to the Audience, readers and the viewers in such a way which depicts them as effectual and stalwart irrespective if their role was positive or negative. The women's role in the plays made an influential impression on the plot and the central theme of the play. These women's traits depicted in the drama gives a modern perspective to it. These could easily pass on many moral lessons and aesthetic values to the present day generation, even though the world has changed with technology. These examples and lessons learned could be implemented and pursued in current day situations. **Keywords:**

Women Characters, Literature; drama; influence; traits; characteristics

"A woman is a dish for the Gods, if the devil dress her not. William Shakespeare (Anthony and Cleopatra)"

Introduction: Every drama and play of Shakespeare comprises of prominent female characters, to suit the specific role. These have a peculiarity to bring out the nature and main traits. It also points out on the way Shakespeare had intended in the creation of these characters. Within each character there are some notable attributes and behavioral patterns which is descriptive in nature. The identification and association of these behavior patterns, actions and reactions of the women characters will definitely lead to successful understanding the deeper meaning. Shakespeare's plays are challenging when it comes to the comprehension and understanding part. The readers, audience and learners need to grasp the deep and meaningful message it contains. It gives insight to the purpose behind such nature of the women characters. This research paper will help readers and all associated with it to understand the theme through a modern point of view. Knowing these natures in advance will help understand the motives behind their actions, if learners and readers are guided towards grasping and thinking about these character sketches of people. This research paper enables this process. All those connected with the drama are enables to enter each character and absorb it better.

Background: All Shakespeare plays were created on the setting of the environmental situations and circumstances of that age and era. It was the Elizabethan age, where people regarded society and social status as the most important and compelling entity. Everyone had to adhere to the social norms and pay keen attention of the opinions of society. Women were living in an age where men enjoyed a little more privileges and freedom. Society regarded males and females differently. In spite of this condition, Shakespeare brought out a modern perspective of their behavior in women. They were bold, brazen and self- confident like the women we see today. Even though they were kept in subjection to men and always kept protected by males of the family, they were still determined, courageous and made a huge impact on the lives of people just like the modern women. It is noted that in Shakespeare's dramas women were obedient they did follow their heart but when they had to conform with duties and responsibilities they willing undertook it with maturity and inclination. This too shows the similarity of the nature of the women of today. They defend their principles and doctrines fearlessly and respectably just as the modern day women do.

Significance: Women were pivotal in the Dramas written by Shakespeare. The roles of the women were a paramount in the theme and the plot, to bring out the pre-eminence of feminine identity. This reveals that Shakespeare has created these characters through deep and sound contemplation. The qualities depicted through these women characters could be the view-point of Shakespeare's own acquaintance with the women whom he came across. The personality has been distinctly fitted in to suit the role in which it was required.

Objectives:

- To explore the importance of women in the Shakespeare's plays.
- To study the relationship of Elizabethan age traits and modern implementation.

- To examine how the actions of women in Shakespeare's plays effected the completeness of the drama.

Research Question: What are the relationship with modern views and traits from the Elizabethan age?

Table 1. Methodology.

Sr. no	Objective	Method; Tools and techniques.
1.	To explore the importance of women in the Shakespeare's plays.	Literature Review and Survey method through random sampling.
2.	To study the relationship of Elizabethan age traits and modern implementation.	Taking Information from the texts, from the play, the summaries and the dramas written by Shakespeare.
3.	To examine how the actions of women in Shakespeare's plays effected the completeness of the drama.	Students, Audience and teachers of the dramas were interviewed through a Questionnaire and Semi- structured Interview

Data Collection process: The researcher collected data through interviewing and discussing the topic with other Professors of drama. Notes were made to the common findings of their opinions. Detailed study was done through intensive reading about the topic. Semi structured questionnaire was used for the direct interviews. The researcher asked participants to give an account of what qualities they noticed in the female characters in the play.

Data Analysis process: The researcher analyzed the data using qualitative method of percentage and average. Since the data is available in subjective form, grouping was done by the researcher, using key words and collective classification.

Presentation: The following are the characteristics which are noted in the women of Shakespeare's plays. One or more trait is present in each character. It is prominent and clear as they progress in their roles. These are easily visible in the generation of women today who possess it with ease and carry it out with confidence. Even though it was of a different era and time the personalities are similar to what we see and experience in the modern generation of women today. *Social Consideration:* All the women characters conformed to the society through their roles. They are always considered about the views from social point of view. For example "Viola from Twelfth Night; or what you will Portia from Merchant of Venice, Gertrude from Hamlet. Rosalind from As You like it". *Role of duty:* All the characters like, "Cordelia, Hermia, Ophelia, Desdemona and Miranda" completed their duties as required of them. *Expectations:* We notice that the characters are of strong principles and hold their opinions of dear regard. They always met the expectations of their counterparts thereby enhancing their own roles. *Inclination* of the readers and the audiences: The preferences and choices of the readers and the audiences are regarded when the women characters are created by Shakespeare, he gave the audience what they wanted to experience through the characters. *Problem solving ability:* We notice that the female characters possess the ability to solve problems that happen to come their way. Like "Viola, Rosalind, Portia, Juliet and Hermia." *Defeat all difficulties:* The women had the capacity to be gentle as well as get over the difficulty faced by them as well as their dear ones. *Ingenious and influential:* The women characters were rather influential on the other characters as well as on the audiences, they created a lasting impression and managed to make the plot well-crafted through their deeds. *Self-Possessed and Intellectual:* The women characters always portrayed cleverness and wit to some extent. Their actions showed that they thought about their actions and well-planned their course of happenings. They showed that they were sure about themselves and had a fair amount of confidence to carry out their plans and course of actions. *Undertaking responsibility:* This was one trait that Shakespeare made quite prominent among the women in his dramas. The women always showed maturity in carrying out whatever was required of them to do. They never backed off from what they had to do. For example "Gertrude from Hamlet, Portia from Merchant of Venice, Viola from Twelfth Night; or What you will" *Preordained positions:* The roles that the women played were always of strength and courage. They showed the confidence and ability through their characters.

Ambitious: Some women Characters like “Lady Macbeth” were ambitious and negative, but that too was carried out with a peculiar influence and touch of confidence where she instigates Macbeth to do the horrible deeds and alters the course of his life. **Absolute and vibrant:** We notice the characters are absolute and vibrant in their actions they do not have fear or doubts upon themselves and their actions what is required of them.

Independent, Obedient and lovable: All the women characters depict a kind of independence in nature. They are also ready to obey authority when needed. **Calm, Modest and assertive:** Women like Nerrisa, Portia, Juliet, Olivia and Miranda show a modest nature though they were self- reliant and free they were modest in their behavior and are in subjection. **Helpful, honest, truthful, loyalty:** These traits are widely seen in most of the women characters of the Shakespeare's drama. They extended their help when anyone needed it, they were truthful and loyal. They were also honest. **Valiant and respectable:** Shakespeare made sure that he brought out the part that women should be respectable in their behavior. He made the characters in such a way where they would be respectable. They were valiant in their behavior. **Undaunted:** The women characters were very sure of themselves, they completed with great determination whatever they had decided to do.

Results, findings and Interpretation: From the information gathered by asking other learners and readers as well as the ones connected with the drama, it is observed that even though these women lived in a different age with the different beliefs, traditions and customs, it is so relatable of the conditions of today in the modern world. We can notice that the modern generation of women are so much like that. The actions and reactions are very closely similar. The personalities in the modern age are much associated with those of that age.

Conclusions and recommendations: It is noted that women Characters were rather distinctive in nature. The characteristics of these women in their roles, have a huge impact on the generations in the modern world. The outcome is the knowledge and awareness of how eminent their character is even today. It played a significant role in the build –up of the play at large. It leads to the learners developing self- awareness, recognition of the traits in the characters and a similar classification of events and traits in general surroundings. Those involved in the plays make associations with the similarities and differences of the personalities depicted in the dramas. It gives the audiences, readers and viewers a fair idea to make an impression about the feminine power within the drama. There is a realization of what is the potential and ability of the women in the drama. The female characteristics are enhanced through enacting and reading the dramas. The effect of their persona is lasting strong on the minds of generations even today.

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