

## EXTENDED ABSTRACT

# “MR DARCY’S REPUTATION AS THE MOST POPULAR ROMANTIC HERO” IN THE NOVEL, PRIDE & PREJUDICE BY JANE AUSTEN

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### Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to analyze the character Mr. Darcy in the novel, “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen in order to build up the major themes related to the fact, “Mr. Darcy’s character development from the beginning to the end of the novel, further how these particular themes reveal, “Mr. Darcy’s reputation as the most popular romantic hero.” A qualitative and descriptive research design is used. There are five major themes which forecast the character development of Mr. Darcy. The themes are pride, introversion, high standards of a gentleman, benevolence for Elizabeth’s family and Steadfast and honest love towards Elizabeth. Therefore, the present study reveals Mr. Darcy’s reputation as the most popular romantic hero in the novel. Future research recommendation is to conduct research on the influences that have been made on modern lady readership regarding the concept of “Mr. Darcy the most popular romantic hero”

**Keywords:** Pride and prejudice, Mr. Darcy, romantic hero

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

The novel, *Pride and Prejudice* is a classical literary work widely read and studied which was written by Jane Austen. The novel has been analyzed in terms of its Victorian socio-cultural context where woman’s lives and future happiness depend greatly on good marriages. Further, the woman is portrayed as the heroine in the novel. On the contrary, the present study supports the idea that, Fitzwilliam Darcy has been portrayed as the most popular romantic hero in Jane Austen’s novel “*Pride and Prejudice*.” The character of Mr. Darcy goes through several changes from “the proudest and most disagreeable man in the world to the savior of the Bennets’ grace and becoming the romantic hero of the novel through winning Ms. Elizabeth Bennet’s heart. (Nedregard 50). There has been a considerable amount of research studies conducted on the concept of marriage and feminism, whereas limited research can be found in relation to this area of study. This study will be an eye-opener to the contemporary society where a man is emotionally suppressed when it comes to the expression of love and affection. “Darcy’s character resonates with a romantic need for self – expression who is unable to communicate his strong emotions in the first proposal scene, and which cries out more “feeling with politeness and pride than love” (Wootton 125) Furthermore, Wootton argues that, “Darcy reflects the ‘dilemma of masculinity’ that emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century

when politeness, which could easily be mistaken for effeminacy, ceased to be the dominant ideal” (Wootton, p. 35).

## *1.2 Deficiency in research*

As Suaidi et al (2016) argues “Pride and Prejudice” describes about society’s views about marriage and Elizabeth Bennet, as the main character in the novel. Elizabeth is explicitly changes of society’s view.(p.96) Therefore, Elizabeth Bennet describes as the heroine of the novel. On the contrary, According to Andersson (2012) “Elizabeth is a bit vain, whereas, Mr Darcy is not only proud, he is not really aware of the fact that one has to be behave politely to everyone.” (P.15). Further, he is not good at communicating with the people around, and he started loving Ms. Elizabeth consequently, there is a character development of Mr Darcy as explaining in this present study. Moreover, as Chang (2014) mentions Ms. Elizabeth Bennet’s independent thinking successfully makes an impact on Mr. Darcy’s moral character as in the novel. After the first marriage proposal of Mr. Darcy, the character development of Mr. Darcy starts. He becomes to a passionate lover which leads him to be the most popular romantic hero in the novel. Therefore, Mr. Darcy shows the qualities of a romantic hero through his character development. Besides, identified research gap is filled by the present study through analyzing the character, Mr. Darcy as the most popular romantic hero in the novel, “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen

### *1.2.1 Statement of the problem*

The present study is conducted on Jane Austen’s “Pride and Prejudice,” focusing on the thematic analysis which is based on descriptive qualitative design. The Majority of research studies are done on prioritizing feminism and women’s plight, on the contrary, a limited number of research studies are conducted on thematic analysis of the character, Mr. Darcy in the novel.

### *1.2.2 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to analyze the character and the dialogues uttered by Mr. Darcy in order to build up the major themes related to the fact, “Mr. Darcy’s character development from the beginning to the end of the novel, further how these particular themes reveal, “Mr. Darcy’s reputation as the most popular romantic hero.” in the novel, “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen.

### *1.2.3 Research Question*

The present research study attempts to answer the following research question,

1. How does Mr. Darcy become the most popular romantic hero in the novel, “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen?

## **2. Methodology**

A qualitative and descriptive research design is used because the novel contains loads of paragraphs including a complex vocabulary pattern. Further, it has to be thoroughly analyzed in order to provide insights into the research question in the present study. According to Bartleby (n.d) Jane Austen’s writing style is a mix of neoclassicism and romanticism. It inspires emotions and imagination, simultaneously, flowing has not a structured form. Therefore, thematic analysis is used. As Anwar (2018) mentions, “In Thematic analysis, the data refers to a particular part of the whole corpus (novel, collection of poems) that needs to be analyzed. The selection of themes/patterns are mostly dependent on the research question which underscores the interest of the researcher.”

### 3. Results and Discussions

#### 3.1 Themes of the novel

There are a few themes that can be concluded in terms of development of the Mr. Darcy's character from the beginning to the end of the novel. These themes are categorized under two main subheadings as followed;

#### 3.2 Mr. Darcy's character before the first proposal

Pride "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me, and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men." At the very beginning of the novel, Mr. Darcy describes as the most proudest man in that town who does not express his thoughts, no smiles, on the contrary, the most wealthiest person. At the ball which is happened at Netherfield, Mr. Darcy meets Ms. Elizabeth and he rejects dancing with her while expressing a set of cynical expressions to Ms. Elizabeth.

Introversion Mr. Darcy starts attracting towards Ms. Elizabeth Bennet. He is not good at showing his feelings and "He began to feel danger of paying Elizabeth too much attention" He is not comfortable at expressing his feelings and thoughts for the others and he tries to hide his real love and affection feelings from Ms. Elizabeth. "When the dancing recommenced, Darcy approached to claim her hand "It's your turn to say something now, Mr. Darcy, I talked about the dance, and you ought to make some kind of remarks on the size of the room. He smiled, and assured her whatever she wished him to say should be said" This situation happens at the second ball at Netherfield, Mr. Darcy came out of his comfort zone and asked Ms. Elizabeth to dance with him.

High standards of a gentleman "In vain have I struggled? It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you" . . . . "Could you expect me to rejoice in the inferiority of your connections? – to congratulate myself on the hope of relations, whose conditions in life is so decidedly beneath my own?" Mr. Darcy seems to be a gentleman with high standards. He expresses his honest love towards Ms. Elizabeth, but he is not ready to lower his standards in front of the woman he adores. It clears that he is not mature at this point, to express and accept Ms. Elizabeth Bennet despite her class and inferiority bonds. Further, he is not good at sugar coated language, he expresses his true feelings of himself to Ms. Elizabeth Bennet. "If I wounded your sister's feelings, it was unknowingly done, and though the motives which governed me may to you very naturally appear insufficient, "Though Ms. Elizabeth rejects his proposal, he behaves like a true gentleman. He writes a letter to Ms. Elizabeth confessing his apologies and the hate content is not included. He addresses each and every point that are misjudged by Ms. Elizabeth

#### 3.3 Mr. Darcy's character development after the first proposal

Benevolence for Elizabeth's family Ms. Elizabeth receives the word from Ms. Gardner, the way Mr. Darcy secretly has helped her family. Further, Mr. Darcy does not want to know Ms. Elizabeth about his good deeds and the benevolent actions for her family. At their last proposal, Mr. Darcy reveals, "But your family owe me nothing. Much as I respect them, I believe I thought only of you." Here, there is an improvement of Mr. Darcy, He respects her family. He stresses the point that he did all that for the sake of her benefit and her betterment, therefore he tells he does not need anything in return

Steadfast and honest love towards Elizabeth "If your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are unchanged; but one word from you will silence me on this subject for ever. . . . . The happiness which this reply produced was such as he had probably never felt before, and he expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do." Mr. Darcy has become to a truly romantic lover. He is humble to propose Ms. Elizabeth Bennet. Further, he mentions his feelings are not changed from the beginning

of their encounter and he wants her in his life. Ms. Elizabeth accepts his proposal and he becomes truly happy

#### 4. Conclusion

The present study analyzes Mr. Darcy's character through thematic analysis. The conversations and the quotes that are related to Mr. Darcy are analyzed. Five major themes are found. The themes are "pride, introverted, high standards of a gentleman, benevolence for Elizabeth's family, and steadfast and honest love towards Elizabeth." These five major themes are answered the research question of the present study. Mr. Darcy gradually becomes the most popular romantic hero in the novel. Reading about Mr. Darcy and his character traits make the readers of the novel fascinated, simultaneously attracting majority of the women readers who are enchanted by Mr. Darcy the romantic hero. Further, the lady readership aspires to have a romantic hero like Mr. Darcy in their relationship. After considering all these factors, there is a recommendation for future researchers, to research on the influences or the effects that have been made on modern lady readership regarding the concept, "Mr. Darcy the most popular romantic hero in the novel," "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen.

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