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Exploration of Father and Son Relation in Shakespeare's Hamlet

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Abstract:

Shakespeare is a world famous Everlasting English playwright, poet and a man with dynamic personality of literature word. Young and old, rich and poor all are madly in love with Shakespeare's writing. Many master pieces were written by him. But Hamlet is all time famous play of William Shakespeare. His own son was Hamnet. He wrote this play in the memory of his son. From this, we come to know that Shakespeare loved his son most so here we are going to explore father and son relations in the play Hamlet.

Shakespeare's father and son relations match with today's scenario. Shakespeare is called as a man of vision. Through Deep learning of this play, we will found the extraction of father and son relation. Shakespeare's foresight will be beneficial to people in today's society to develop the understanding between each other in family, society and human beings. This will become a piloting factor for maintenance of the father and son relationship in present situations.

Keywords: *Father and Son Relations, William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Man of Vision, Present Scenario.*

Introduction:

William Shakespeare is a most liked personality worldwide since 16th century till present time. He married Anne Hathaway. He had 3 children, Susanna, Hamnet, Judith. He was a classical artist of Elizabethan age of English literature. His works are criticized by many critics in each and every aspect. He is admired by many critics. His vast knowledge, experience and strength of writing in human relations attracts today's generations too. William Shakespeare was the National poet of England in the time of Queen Elizabeth. He was called bard of Avon. He was a playwright, actor and poet. He has written 39 plays, 154 sonnets, 3 narrative poems. His plays have been translated in various languages. Shakespeare's plays were widely performed in every corner of the world. Shakespeare's work is divided into 3 categories, Comedy plays, Problem plays, and History plays.

This research paper highlights the father and son relation of three young men Hamlet, Fortinbrass and Laertes. Relations are emerged as it is in his characters of plays. His ideas are

exactly imposed in his writing and it touches to readers' heart from 16th century to present scenario. Many serious problems arise in relations because of misunderstandings, skepticism, distrust, lust greediness etc. Human relations of 16th century is compared to present scenario through his literature to overcome the problems in relations to avoid disputes and to create a strong bond in relation between father and son.

Review of literature:

By extracting the writing works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, many authors, critics, examined his works by various aspects through books, articles, journals, essays to help further research to encourage researchers. Ben Johnson, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Coleridge William Hazlitt, A.C Bradley criticized his works.

Ernest Jones put forth the question of characters narcissism, psychotic behavior in terms of conflicting needs in relations. Feminist critics such as Claude Levistrauss stressed on dominating nature of men and fathers, gender relations, family structures etc. These authors highlighted the father and son relations of Shakespeare's plays will be helpful for further study in research.

Keverne Smith in his book, 'Shakespeare and Son: A Journey in Writing and Grieving', focuses the father and son in Shakespeare's works. Fred B. Tromley in his book, Fathers and Sons in Shakespeare reveals various aspects about relations. Moreover, different literary websites on internet is also helpful in this regard.

Objectives:

- a) The present paper finds out Shakespeare's works on father and son relations in 16 century.
- b) To compare father and son relations in Renaissance period and present era.
- c) To analyze the problems aroused in relations and to find out its solutions.
- d) To study the usefulness of Shakespeare's vision of bond between father and sonrelation.
- e) To examine various aspects of relationships.

Methodology:

The primary source is obtained from the English writings of Shakespeare, his criticism and the syllabus of master degree level. The method which is helpful to complete this research work is only observation method. By using this method the researcher has gone through different literature, articles, journals, research papers, critical works and websites to find out related study materials. Different books of Shakespeare have been studied by various authors to collect the data for research paper to make study more reliable.

Definition:

Relation is one person's connection with another person. It means how an individual men or women is related or connected to another man or woman.

Discussion:

- **Father son relations in Hamlet**

Hamlet is a tragedy play written by the world famous playwright William Shakespeare. As far as relation between father and son concerned, it is unique such as Hamlet, Prince Hall and Edger. Fred B. Tromely demonstrate that the relationship are more complicated than most critics have assumed. While Shakespearean son often act as their steadfast defenders. We can find the complex attitude of father and son in Shakespeare's work.

In Hamlet, father and son relationship includes stories of three young men Fortinbrass, Laertes and Hamlet. They are having love and respect for their respective fathers. They love their fathers in such a way that they are ready to take revenge and sacrificed their life for taking revenge of murder of their fathers. From this relation we get the loyalty of these sons towards their fathers. We explore the relationship side by side in those relations. Tragic relations of father and son are formed in Hamlet. To take revenge of his father's death Hamlet had taken harsh decisions. Laertes and his father Polonius also have loyalty in their relations and that's why he became ready to kill the king and then to Hamlet. Fort in brass relation also have the sides of nobility and honesty. In Hamlet a dead father's ghost insisted his son Hamlet to take a revenge of his death. Because Hamlet's Uncle Claudius himself killed his brother, who was the father of Hamlet. Here Hamlet had a great attachment with his father that's why he was very sad with his father's death. This is imaginary part of the play that, the ghost of a dead person talks with living person. Through this scene, Shakespeare shows father and son relationship and the attachment that though the father is dead, he wanted to talk with his son and want to tell him the truth of his death.

Moreover, Hamlet and his father's relationship was not easy to understand. King Hamlet, the ghost of dead father of Hamlet, had never seen his son in childhood. So Hamlet described the greatness of his father by another view. Hamlet failed to describe the memories of childhood. He is unable to unfold the personality of his father. As a king hamlet's father was not devoted towards his son and family. Instead of this, Hamlet loved his father more and gave his whole life to take revenge of his father's murder.

At beginning of the play, Hamlet came to know the truth of his father's death and he started hating Claudius who killed his father and he tries some attempts to punish him for his sin. The relationship of Hamlet and his father (Old Hamlet) was of short span. But it affected whole play. The king was a weak father who never spent time with Hamlet. He failed to fulfill family issues but Hamlet had given his own life to fulfill his father's wish to take revenge of his murder. Hamlet got confused between who was his legitimate father? Uncle Claudius! Or the old Hamlet!

Hamlet struggled over this question during the play. He didn't understand the solution over it. His thoughts and feelings got cleared by ghost's visit. Hamlet just wanted to keep the honor of his

father, to pursue his mother from getting married to Claudius to save his Empire back in peace. Hamlet was sad because his mother tells him not to Mourn over the death of father so long.

Hamlet's father told Hamlet that, his uncle Claudius had killed him to become a king of Denmark and married to Gertrude the mother of Hamlet. Hamlet's father expected from his son Hamlet to take a revenge of his death. This incident tells us the relation doesn't stand-alone. Responsibilities and Expectations come with every relation here the father's ghost expected from son Hamlet to take revenge with Claudius and give justice to him.

Every human relation has some responsibilities and Expectations. Father and son relation is a somewhat different from other relations. The love of father is a less expressed as compared to mother's love and responsibilities are fulfilled in more proportion. Shakespeare nicely tried to present such relationship in a tragic form. In the rest drama, the main character Hamlet tried to find out the truth. Did his uncle really kill his father? He did a lot of efforts to clear it out. He took many efforts in his life to figure out the reason of his father's death he had to spend his days like a crazy, wired person.

William Shakespeare had presented this relation in a very good manner. Hamlet arranged an enact play of his father's murder as the story told by the ghost in the beginning of act. He figured out the reactions of his uncle Claudius and his mother Gertrude. He made himself sure that both are guilty. His suspect turns into this trust that his uncle Claudius really killed his father. Shakespeare shows the love and affection of son towards his father. Hamlet planned to find the real criminals and finally he struggled and suffered a lot to take revenge. Finally he had to fight with Laertes who was brother of his lover Ophelia and son of Polonius who was killed by Hamlet in a misunderstanding. Lots of tragedies happened to Hamlet because of the murder happened by mistake. He lost Ophelia and suffered from the grief of her death.

At last Hamlet killed Claudius and completed revenge of his father's death. Being injured he also dies himself too at the end of the play. The plays has tragic unhappy ending.

In this play Shakespeare presented the love and affection of a son towards his father in such a way, Hamlet gives his own life to punish the killer of his father. This is nothing but a gratefulness of Hamlet towards his father. It is a presentation of pure, true love of father and son is throughout the play. The father and son relation never die. It is with and without life. The love of father and son is unconditional. The father and son relationship always has a struggle to do things for each other.

- **Fortinbrass and his father relation:**

Fortinbrass was a soldier and a nephew of old Fortinbras the king of Norway. Fortinbrass lost his father in a conflict between Norway and Denmark and his father killed by Hamlet's father old Hamlet in a battle. To take avenge of his father's death Fortinbrass attacks Denmark and try to take Danish crown for himself. Fortinbrass gathers army to conquer Denmark. Like Hamlet he also not

got crown of Norway. These father and son have also loyal relation with each other.

- **Laertes and Polonius:**

Laertes was brother of Hamlet's girlfriend Ophelia and son of Polonius who was chief counselor of King Claudius. Laertes returned Denmark from France during his absence Hamlet killed Polonius by mistake. Laertes came to the king Claudius and started blaming him. King Claudius explains how Hamlet killed Polonius and he is your enemy not I.

- **Hamlet and Claudius:**

Claudius is the step father of Hamlet. He cheated his brother, old Hamlet for the crown of Denmark. Claudius also married old Helmet's wife Gertrude. When Laertes returned from France to confront the king Claudius about the murder of his father Polonius, Claudius explained him that Hamlet is a real killer. He also convinced him to kill his stepson Hamlet. From this negative father and son relation, It is put forth by Shakespeare Claudius would never became a true father. Shakespeare tried to cover-up wide angles of father and son relations skillfully.

Conclusion:

Shakespeare's plays consist of several interpretations. This research attempts to look the father and son relation in a wide view. The paper tried to explore the father and son relationships in the Elizabethan period. Shakespeare always focuses on bonding of relations and gives more emphasis on the father and son relation as he is emotionally attached with this by his own point of you. Shakespeare leads to focuses on a people's view in the manner that relations are breakable like glasses. This is very unfortunate that human beings are not enjoying relations with family and society as well. Positive relations keep human stress less. One should have to do justice to the relations. Shakespeare highlighted father-son relations in Hamlet to spread the message for future readers that every son should follow his father's order and take all responsibilities on their shoulders. The father and son relation is a priceless. Both should have the affections towards each other's. There might be harsh talk; there might be some restrictions by fathers on sons. But there is a pure motive of fathers for their wellbeing. For bright future, there is a worry behind the harsh talk, there is thought of sculpturing a noble character of his son. So sons should be obedient and wholehearted thinkers about fathers. They are invisible protective shield of children. He is a kind, responsible character in every son's life. Fathers are the real Heroes of son's lives. Father and son relation is must to be nurtured. Shakespeare artistically unfolded father and son relation in Hamlet.

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