

PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN CHARACTERS IN SOMEONE LIKE YOU BY

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ABSTRACT

Nikita Singh has emerged as a rising romance writer in the last decade. She is a distinguished writer who deals with various themes. She writes about love, loss, and self-discovery. In her contribution to Indian English literature, she looks towards life with a modern perspective. She is famous in the young generation for her ability to portray the inner lives of her characters in a realistic way that similarises to readers as their own self, into a compelling and authentic way. At her initial stage as a writer, she has to face many challenges and rejections by many scholars, but her continuous efforts and strong will power to pen down her thoughts without hesitation made her to be popular among the young generation. Like her own experience, she makes her characters face many problems, challenges in their lives, who at the end become successful in getting rid of them and feel happy with what they have. Hence, her works are characterized by a focus on the inner lives of her characters, exploring their emotional journeys and personal growth. Their journey helps them to explore self-discovery and self-awareness.

KEY WORDS : Portrayal, romance, perspective, realistic, personal growth.

INTRODUCTION :

Nikita Singh is an Indian romance fiction writer. She writes about love, relationships, friendship, struggles, self-discovery and understanding. She has inspired many young and amateur writers to pen down their thoughts very successfully. She is the bestselling author of thirteen books including *The Reason is You*, *Every Time It Rains*, *Like a Love Song*, *The Promise* and *After All This Time*. She has also edited and contributed to an anthology of stories titled *25 Strokes of Kindness*. Her 2016 novel, *Like a Love Song*, debuted at No. 2 at Hindustan Times Bestseller list. In the following year, *Every Time It Rains*, debuted on No. 7 on the same list. In February 2018, her book, *Letters To My Ex*, was released and sold widely across the Indian subcontinent. Her most recent novel, *The Reason Is You*, was released in February 2019. Nikita's most recent book, a collection of stories *What Do You See When You Look In The Mirror?* released in August 2021.

The present research article focus upon the novel, *Someone Like You*, by Nikita Singh, which is a contemporary novel that revolves around the lives of five people who are looking for the right path in their lives. The novel begins with the story of a girl named Niharika Singh, the protagonist of the novel, who considers herself to be ugly until her elder sister, Simran, gives her a wonderful makeover. After her transformation, Niharika realized that she is also as beautiful as every other girl whom she used to consider prettier than her. Further, in the story, she goes into a completely new city for her college, where she meets three new boys, Tanmay, Karthik, and Akshat. Tanmay eventually becomes her best friend, and Karthik ends up being a mysterious guy in her life whom she likes but always remains confused about. Akshat turns out to be her sister's ex-boyfriend, but they start forming an unusual bond. In the story, there is another girl called Pia, who is Niharika's roommate and her only friend on the new college campus. Pia is already in a long-distance relationship with Vishal but starts liking Tanmay, who is already in love with her. While revolving around love stories and each character's individual lives. All these interesting things are described in a beautiful lucid manner.

In the present paper, researcher has tried to point out and focus upon the women characters in the selected novel of Nikita Singh, *Someone Like You* published in the year, 2013. In the novel, *Someone Like You* the story moves around the central character of Niharika, the protagonist of the novel and her elder sister, Simran. The two central female characters, Simran and Niharika, are portrayed with depth and complexity, showcasing different aspects of womanhood, strength, and vulnerability. There is another female character in the novel, she is Pia, Niharika's roommate and best friend. The present paper highlights upon the women characters of Niharika, Simran and Pia. Simran, the elder sister of Niharika, is depicted as a young, free minded woman. She is strong, independent and confident in her own right. She doesn't feel shy about her emotions her emotions, rather she is bold enough to handle her problems and emotions in the life. Simran is significant in shaping the narrative of self-love, growth, and realizations, especially as she navigates the complexities of love and relationships. She is portrayed as a young woman who has caught in the stimulation of love and self-realization. She is in a complicated relationship with Aditya, a man who holds a special place in her life but is also part of her emotional conflict. The novel delves into Simran's journey of balancing her feelings for Aditya with the growing realization that sometimes love, no matter how intense, doesn't always work out as expected.

Niharika, on the other hand, contrasts with Simran in many ways. She is portrayed as someone who is initially seen as calm and in control of her life. However, as the story progresses, we see that she, too, grapples with emotions, insecurities, and personal struggles. Niharika embodies the character of someone who's learned to put up a posture while hiding own vulnerabilities. Her role is significant in understanding the different layers of friendship, loyalty, and the internal conflicts women face while trying to meet societal expectations. She also provides a mirror to the protagonist's experiences, making the reader question what it means to truly be oneself.

Both women face challenges that reflect their vulnerabilities, emotional struggles, and aspirations. Their contrasting personalities and experiences help to highlight the different facets of love and life that the author seeks to explore.

Another female character portrayed in the novel is Pia, the only friend and roommate of Niharika. She is the witness of each and every incident and experience that Niharika goes through. Pia, as a true friend, offers insights and suggests ideas, supports her friend Niharika each time when it is necessary. This help of Pia reflects the themes of friendship and love for friend. She encourages Niharika to explore her own identity and passions. She is a loyal and supportive friend of Niharika. She supports and is always with Niharika in her every up and downs, in each difficult situation. She encourages Niharika to chase her dreams and not to compromise with her ambitions for anyone else. It reveals her belief that pursuing personal goals is vital in life.

CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN CHARACTERS

Both Simran and Niharika face distinct yet interconnected challenges that reflect the complexities of love, relationships, and self-discovery.

- **Navigating the Journey Between Love and Relationships:** Both women face the challenge of understanding love and how it fits into their lives. Each of them has their own experiences and expectations of love, but both find themselves encountering emotional turmoil and confusion when dealing with love and relationships.

- **Fighting to Balance Between Personal Identity and Expectations:** Whether it's societal, familial, or relational, both Simran and Niharika wrestle with the expectations placed upon them, whether in terms of career, beauty standards, or social roles. They must learn to navigate these external pressures while staying true to their own desires and identities. . At one place Simran says, “I don’t want to be someone’s second choice, Simran. I want to be someone’s first.” This line reflects Simran’s desire for emotional fulfillment and the need for respect and priority in relationships. The statement points out the modern woman’s desire to be valued for who and how she is.
- **Journey Between Self-Discovery and Growth:** Both characters are on a path of self-discovery, learning to understand better who they are, what they wish for, and how they can emerge themselves as individuals. Simran says, “I’ve realized that sometimes it’s not the love you need, but the space to grow. You can’t be who you are supposed to be if you’re constantly living someone else’s dream.” Here, Simran acknowledges the importance of personal growth and the space to understand one’s identity, apart from the relationships they are involved in. It highlights a key struggle for women today—balancing love and relationships while nurturing one’s own ambitions and individuality. She again speaks, “The only person I need to be better than is the person I was yesterday. No one else matters.” This line throws light upon Niharika’s perspective on self-empowerment and personal growth. Instead of competing with others, she focuses on self-improvement and not letting comparisons define her worth, a message that resonates with women striving to find their own identity.
- **Journey Between Self-Desires Societal Expectations:**

While examining the character of Niharika, we encounter with her statement on self-discovery is as following, she says, ““We spend too much of our lives living up to others' expectations. Sometimes, it’s okay to just live for yourself.” These lines explain Niharika’s realization that in our life we should not always try to fulfil other’s dreams instead we, sometimes, should think about ourselves, our wish, our dream. From this it is clear that this statement by Niharika talks about the modern woman’s struggle to detach from societal pressures and embrace personal happiness and freedom. While at one instance, Niharika says, “We are all capable of more than we think. We just have to believe in ourselves, even when no one else does.” Here, Niharika highlights the strength and energy that lies within every woman, emphasizing the importance of self-belief in overcoming obstacles. When we focus again on the role of Simran, she too at one place says, “Being vulnerable doesn’t make you weak. It makes you real.” These lines by Simran explain the importance of embracing vulnerability rather than seeing it as a weakness. This is a powerful message for modern women, encouraging them to accept their emotional side without shame or fear. The journey of these characters in the novel is packed with challenges as they learn to confront their flaws, fears, and vulnerabilities. These challenges make these characters relatable and multidimensional representing a different aspect of the emotional, social, and personal struggles that women often face in their lives.

CONCLUSION

In the present paper the researcher concludes with the statement that both Niharika and Simran’s character reflect the multidimensionality of women’s lives, as they navigate societal pressures, love, friendship, and personal growth. Their contrasting character traits create an

engaging dynamic perspective to its readers. The novel highlights the challenges related to love, relationship, self-discovery, personal growth and fulfilment which women face in their lives. Singh has portrayed her women characters as strong yet vulnerable, highlighting the complexities of their inner worlds, their relationships which is found in modern women's life.

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