Parents and Daughter Relationships in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

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ABSTRACT

This study is research that focuses on the relationship between parents and their daughters and the impact it has on the main female character in drama Romeo and Juliet. The analysis shows that the role of parents, especially fathers, in determining their daughter's life, including marriage matters, has a huge influence on the decision her daughter takes when she chooses the man she loves over the man her parents chose because it ended tragically. The parenting style of the parents, especially the father, at that time had changed his daughter from obedient to rebellious, even though she had to lose her life. The study conducted library research in the process of writing this thesis. The data were taken from the original version Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* ebook (1957), Global Grey. The theory proposed by Greenbalt (1982) with the social and cultural context approach by Long (2024) is used in analyzing what kind of the relationship between the parents and their daughter in this drama resulted in a tragedy at the end of the story. The discovery was that the very big role of a father in his daughter's life, especially in determining her life partner, had made his daughter take a very brave decision which ended tragically but everything is to late.

Keywords: *Parents, daughter, relationships, Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature refers to works created through the use of beautiful and artistic language, which generally express rich and meaningful thoughts, emotions and life experiences. The goals of creating literary works can vary, ranging from aesthetic beauty, conveying a message or criticizing society, storytelling, to exploring various aspects of human existence including love, conflict, aesthetics, and the nature of truth. Each form has characteristics and conventions that differentiate it, as well as a unique way of conveying stories, emotions and ideas. Klarer (2004) suggests that literature is often defined as all forms of written work, and not every piece of writing qualifies as literature in the stricter sense of the term.

Literature, in its broad scope, is divided into three main forms: poetry, prose, and drama. In this research, the author focuses on one part, namely drama. When choosing the title of the drama that was the material for her research, the writer came to the title Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare, 1597). The title of this drama caught the writer's attention because even though it has been discussed and researched by many people, especially in terms of romance (e.g. Callaghan, 2001; Kellermann, 2021).

As mentioned above, one of Shakespeare's plays that is famous to this day and is widely discussed by people is the play Romeo and Juliet (1597), one of the best examples of his dramatic skills and also one of the most famous and enduring tragedies ever written. This work depicts a tragic love story between two teenagers from feuding families, the Montagues and the Capulet, in Verona, Italy. The play, filled with themes of love, hatred, friendship, fate, and death, was first performed at the end of the 16th century and has become one of the most famous love stories in world literature. Romeo and Juliet not only explores the depths of human emotion but also criticizes the folly of endless

family conflict. Shakespeare's works.

Drama

Drama is literature intended for performance, characterized by its use of dialogue and stage directions. Dramatic works are written by playwrights and are intended to be performed by actors on a stage. Drama can encompass a wide range of styles, from tragedy to comedy and everything in between.

For a contemporary perspective on the classification of literature into poetry, prose, and drama, Comparative Literature has contributed significantly to the field with his insights into world literature and literary theory, Damrosch (2000) explores the concept of world literature in the context of globalization and the circulation of literary works beyond their cultures of origin.

Drama is a form of literature written for the purpose of being performed on stage or screen. Drama combines dialogue between characters and often stage directions to bring the story and conflict to life through performance. Drama can take various forms, including tragedy, comedy, and modern drama, with a focus on the interactions between characters and their influence on the development of the story.

Parents and Children in Renaissance Period

Parental behavior in the Renaissance period, the era when Romeo and Juliet was written by Shakespeare, could vary greatly depending on social status, geographic location, and other individual factors. Parental behavior in the Renaissance was influenced by a combination of social values, economic needs, and religious beliefs. Among the nobility and upper classes, marriages were often arranged by parents to strengthen political or economic alliances. This means that parents have a big role in determining their children's future, especially when it comes to marriage. Medieval parents often did not raise their children alone, but with help from other factors such as caregivers, social commentators, and religious leaders (Lesko, para. 1). Typically, girls marry at a young age and give birth to their first child in their mid-teens (Lesko, para. 2).

In Renaissance society, the father was the head of the family and wielded considerable authority over all household members, including his wife and children. The father's role was as a provider, moral guide, and disciplinarian. His primary concern regarding his children was often tied to ensuring they maintained and enhanced the family's social and economic status. Mothers, while central to the emotional and daily care of children, also upheld the social norms and helped instill values of obedience and piety.

Marriages were often arranged by parents to improve the family's social standing or economic situation. Children had little say in these arrangements, and marital alliances were often negotiated when the children were very young. Daughters were particularly affected, as their marriages were key to forming alliances and their dowries could significantly affect the family's finances.

Renaissance Period

The Renaissance, which extended from the 14th through the 17th century, represented a significant era of cultural, artistic, and intellectual expansion, heralding the shift from Medieval times into the Modern age. Beginning in Italy, this period was characterized by a renewed interest in the cultural, philosophical, and literary works of ancient Greece and Rome. Marked by notable progress in the fields of art, science, music, literature, and exploration, the era was propelled by humanist ideals that highlighted the capacity for human innovation and intellectual achievement.

Within this dynamic cultural and intellectual context, the roles and expectations of individuals were deeply influenced by social status, gender, and family structure. The relationships between parents and their daughters during the Renaissance were largely dictated by societal norms that prioritized family honor and economic considerations over personal desires or love. Daughters were often seen as valuable assets in establishing or strengthening familial alliances through marriage. Marriages were typically arranged to secure political ties, expand family wealth, or enhance social status. Parents, especially in the nobility and upper classes, played a crucial role in negotiating these marriages, often with little input from the daughters themselves.

However, the status and roles of women, particularly in marriage, were governed by longstanding social and legal norms that saw little progressive change during this time. During the Renaissance, marriage was primarily viewed as a strategic alliance between families rather than a personal choice based on love. Women were typically married young, often in their early teens, while men might be in their late twenties or older.

Relationships

A relationship is any bond between two individuals, which can be either positive or negative. You can form relationships with various people, including family and friends. The term "being in a relationship" is commonly associated with romantic connections but can also refer to different kinds of interactions one person has with another. Being in a relationship doesn't necessarily imply physical intimacy, emotional connection, or commitment. People participate in many different types of relationships, each with its own distinct traits. (Cherry,2024).

There are four type of relationships according to (Ledwell, 2024) namely: Family relationship, Romantic relationship, Friendships and Acquaintanceships.

The following is an explanation of these types of relationships:

1.   **Family relationships**: Family is probably one of our earliest experiences with relationships. It includes parents, grandparents, siblings, spouses, children, aunts, uncles, cousins, and more. These individuals, particularly in our early years, influence our physical and mental development and demonstrate what relationships are like. However, not all family relationships are perfect; we all know they come with many ups and downs. As you grow older, you start to value signs of trust, communication, reliability, and the ability to work through conflicts together to define a healthy family relationship. Togetherness is crucial because, despite the good and bad times, it fosters growth and strengthens bonds, making the family resilient.

2.   **Romantic relationship**: often seen as the most complicated. Because they consist of multiple components like passion, emotional commitment, and intimacy. And, of course, love. However, a romantic relationship requires trust from both parties and time to develop, along with ongoing effort. Over time, as you become more comfortable with each other, you can lower your guard and relax, feeling as at ease with your partner as you are with yourself. This comfort allows you to share your deepest thoughts and emotions without fear of judgment. —the powerful four-letter word that can elevate a relationship to new levels.

3.   **Friendships:** Friendships are relationships that can change throughout our lives. It's natural not to have the same friends now that we had when we were younger, and that's perfectly fine. As we age, we grow and evolve, and it's normal for friendships to evolve as well. Similar to family relationships, friendships are based on core values because friends are people you choose. In healthy friendships, you both give and receive support that keeps you honest, boosts your self-esteem, and keeps you motivated.

4.   **Acquaintanceships:** most of us probably have quite a few of them. Similar to a friend, an acquaintance is someone you know, but not someone you know as closely as a friend. This might be someone from school, work, or a friend of a friend. Acquaintances are like casual friendships, useful for making connections, referrals, or simply people you encounter occasionally, such as at the gym or a coffee shop. Acquaintances typically form a more diverse group than close friends, often connecting with broader social circles within our communities. So, if you don't know someone on a personal level or haven't intentionally socialized with them, chances are they are considered an acquaintance.

Parents and Daughter in Shakespeare's Works

Seventeen of Shakespeare's plays explore crises of intimacy as daughters choose to leave their fathers to commit to marriage, (Dreher, 1986). In his major comedies, tragedies, and romances, Shakespeare examines the love relationship between fathers and daughters from a variety of perspectives and the relationship between father and daughter shows a conflict between traditional and progressive social values (Dreher, 1986).

In Shakespeare's time, docility and subservience to male family members was a characteristic of women (Halenárov, 2015). Then, why does Shakespeare focus so much on the theme of a girl's obedience? This might be because that the ideal woman is considered to be an individual who is gentle and does not talk much and is obedient to her father and husband. This could be due to that British society in the early modern era was heavily influenced by the idea that men were the dominant figures in the family.

As previously explained, the relationship between parents and children in the Middle Ages was influenced by various social, economic and cultural factors that prevailed at that time. Literary works feature a variety of relationships among characters, with the dynamic between parents and children being particularly notable. This relationship can range from nurturing to harmful, or even a combination of both, mirroring real-life impacts on character evolution and how these interactions influence the development of the child's personality (Byerly, 2020).

Father and Daughter Relationship

During the Renaissance, when the drama Romeo and Juliet was created, the behavior of parents, especially fathers, played a big role in determining their daughters' future, including determining their marriage. Fathers played a crucial role in the lives of their daughters, primarily as the main authority figures and as guardians of their daughters' welfare and future. Fathers were the primary authority figures in the household and had legal control over their children, including decisions about their education, marriage, and social interactions. This authority meant that fathers were centrally involved in shaping the futures of their daughters.

The good relationship between the father (Capulet) and his daughter (Juliet) was demonstrated by the father by preparing a prospective husband who was considered worthy from a respectable circle. As seen in the following dialogue:

But saying o'er what I have said before
My child is yet a stranger in the world
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years,
Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride

(Act I, Scene I)

Soft. Take me with you, take me with you, wife.
How, will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

(Act.III, Scene V)

The patriarchal structure of society at the time when the drama Romeo and Juliet was written showed that the father's power over his wife, especially over his daughters, was very clear. Renaissance society was predominantly patriarchal, meaning that men held primary power and predominated in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property. In such a context, the lives of women and girls were largely defined by their relationships to men—first their fathers and brothers, and later their husbands. With the patriarchal culture during the Renaissance, it was clear that the father was the most powerful figure over his household, including his wife, children and workers. Capulet is seen several times reminding his wife to remind Juliet to prepare herself for her wedding day in the next few days.

Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed
Acquaint her here of my son Paris's love
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next,

Well, get you gone. A Thursday be it then
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed.
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day
Farewell, my lord – Light to my chamber, ho !

(Act III, Scene IV)

The father-daughter relationship during the Renaissance was predominantly shaped by the father's role as an authority figure and guardian. While the primary focus was often on social and economic responsibilities, such as marriage arrangements, there were instances where fathers influenced their daughters through education and emotional support, reflecting the complex nature of family dynamics during this period. Even though the father only had one daughter in his life, his orders had to be obeyed. This shows the patriarchal culture at that time, where the father's will was absolute. This shows the patriarchal culture at that time, where the father's will was absolute.

I tell thee what,—get thee to church a Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face.
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me.

My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had lent us but this only child.
But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her.

(Act III, Scene V)

At that time, marriages among the nobility and upper class were also due to economic and political interests, so the father arranged his daughter's marriage to someone of the same class.

Still, my care hath been to have her matched,
and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly allied,
Stuff'd, as they say, with honorable parts,

(Act III, Scene V)

The good relationship between Juliet and her father at the previous time makes Juliet try to beg her father to listen to her opinion. Even though Juliet was aware that as her father's property, she had to obey her father's rules for her, including the marriage intended for her, as proof that girls' obedience at that time to their parents, especially their father, was absolute, it could not be denied. Like the following:

Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

(Act III, Scene V)

Mother and Daughter Relationship

During the Renaissance, a mother was usually assisted by a nurse in raising her daughter, as was Juliet's mother (Lady Capulet). Juliet's mother was assisted by a nurse in raising her daughter Juliet. The mother will ask the nurse about her
daughter's whereabouts and condition, however the mother is always attentive and loves her daughter very much and always gives her space to convey personal things directly. As we can see:

Nurse, where's my daughter? Call her forth to me.
This is the matter. Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret. Nurse, come back again.

(Act I, Scene I)

As a child from an upper class who was taught good manners, and an obedient child, Juliet responded to her mother very politely, this shows the good relationship between mother and daughter.

Madam, I am here. What is your will?

(Act I,Scene I)

The way Juliet responds politely to her mother can also be seen in the next dialogue when Lady Capulet asks about the wedding plans that her father and mother have planned. Juliet remained polite even though she did not agree with the plan.

Lady Capulet: Marry, that marry is the very theme
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married ?

Juliet: It is an honour that I dream not of.

(Act I, Scene III)

Juliet realizes she will not marry Paris, the man of her father's choice, because she does not love him. However, she tried to express what was in her heart even though it would be meaningless,

considering that her father's will would happen to her. Likewise, the mother, who is submissive to her husband, wants Juliet to convey her own objections to the marriage plans her father has planned for her.

> Juliet: I wonder at this haste, that I must wed
> Ere he that should be husband comes to woo
> I pray you tell my lord and father, madam,
> I will not marry yet, and when I do, I swear
> It shall be Romeo…
>
> Lady Capulet: Here comes your father, tell him so yourself,
> And see how he will take it at your hands

(Act III, Scene IV)

The way Lady Capulet answers Juliet is seen as follows, which shows how she must obey her husband Capulet as the head of the family and the highest authority in the family. Juliet's mother stated her position that she was only conveying her father's wishes, and the rest Juliet had to say directly about her objections to him.

> Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.
> Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

(Act III, Scene V)

As the mother (Lady Capulet) really loves her daughter (Juliet), she gently greets and asks how her child is, and worries about her because her daughter is sad after the death of her cousin. The mother did not want her daughter to drag on in sadness and tried to cheer her up by conveying what she considered good news, namely her daughter's wedding plans in the near future.

> Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn
> he gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
> The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,
> Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

(Act III, Scene V)

Juliet is a child who respects her father and mother. Even though she didn't agree with the marriage plans made by her parents, she tried to persuade her mother by calling him 'o sweet my mother' so that her mother would side with her and try to understand her feelings. Juliet tried to prevent the wedding plans from happening by asking her mother for a postponement with saying "delay this marriage for a month, a week". As we can see:

> Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
> That sees into the bottom of my grief?
> O sweet my mother, cast me not away,
> Delay this marriage for a month, a week,
> Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
> In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

(Act III, Scene V)

2.   METHOD

Research Design

A method is a well-organized way to achieve the goals of an activity carried out. In the context of research, research methods are very important, because the use and selection of appropriate and good methods will produce research that is in accordance with the research objectives. This research design uses descriptive research by applying existing theories in this case the New Historicism theory, namely about social and culture at that time which aims to collect data or information to be compiled, described and analyzed, which aims to solve problems based on existing data, by presenting, analyzing and interpreting data. (Creswell, 2017). Romeo and Juliet will be analyzed using qualitative descriptions to understand how the relationship between parents and their daughter had an impact on the tragedy.

Descriptive qualitative research is a technique employed in social sciences and related disciplines to investigate and comprehend human experiences, behaviors, and social phenomena with thorough and detailed exploration. In contrast to quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical data and statistical analysis, descriptive qualitative research seeks to offer a deep, nuanced portrayal of a particular phenomenon.

Data and Source of Data

This ebook takes act one until act five. Meanwhile, the dialogue from this drama will be taken as data or secondary sources that shows the relationships between parents and their daughter. For information taken from ebooks, journal articles, journals, thesies, dissertations, websites, and biographies, will be used as supporting data relevant to the matter of this research.

The writer used the source of data or primary source in this study is a printed ebook entitled Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare (1597).

Technique of Data Collection

For this research, the writer used library research. Firstly, the writer reads the drama text on and on to know and get the full understanding about the topic, then to find out the common thread of the relationships between parents and daughter (in this case, Capulet, Lady Capulet, and their daughter, Juliet). The writer does not read the original version only, but also the simplified version, to compare and double check the story. Then, the researcher reviews the literature pertaining to the topic.

Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing the relationship between the parents (father and mother) and their daughter in Romeo and Juliet, the New Historicism theory (Brewton, n.d.) is used. The theory which is often associated with Greenblatt's (1982) places historical contexts to understand literary texts rather than merely the texts themselves.   Therefore with the theory, the interpretations of the relationships analyzed in the study use the social and cultural contexts (Long, 2024) of the family where the play was produced which was the Elizabethan era or Renaissance period

3.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

By referring to Long's New Historicism theory about social and cultural relations, the writer finds that there are two types of relationships out of the four types of relationships described by Ledwell's theory in the drama Romeo and Juliet. The types of relationships based on Ledwell's theory are family relationship, friendship relationship, romantic, and Acquaintanceships. There are two types of relationships in the drama Romeo and Juliet, namely family relationship, and friendship relationship, as explained by the writer as follows:

1. Family relationship: there are 13 conversation between Juliet and her parents (father and mother) that shows family relationship.
2. Friendship relationship: there are 3 conversation between Juliet and her parents that shows friendship relationship.

The author of the play Romeo and Juliet wants to show that the relationship between parents, namely father and mother, and their daughter is a family relationship as usual, but there are times when it looks like friends in only a few small parts. The family relationships in this drama show the role

of father and mother at that time in accordance with the culture prevailing in society that fathers played more roles than mothers in their daughters' lives.

Discussion

1. Family relationship: In this section each word represents the attitude of a father and mother towards their daughter and how the father and mother express it through their actions towards their daughter.

Capulet/Juliet's father:

But saying o'er what I have said before
My child is yet a stranger in the world
She hath not seen the change of fourteen years,
Let two more summers wither in their pride
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride

(Act I, Scene I)

Soft. Take me with you, take me with you, wife.
How, will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?
Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blest,
Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

(Act.III, Scene V)

Wife, **go you to her ere you go to bed**
Acquaint her here of my son Paris's love
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next,

Well, get you gone. A Thursday be it then
Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed.
Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day
Farewell, my lord – Light to my chamber, ho !

(Act III, Scene IV)

My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest
That God had lent us but this only child.
But now **I see this one is one too much,**
And that we have a curse in having her.

(Act III, Scene V)

Still, my care hath been to have her matched,
and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly allied,
Stuff'd, as they say, with honorable parts,

(Act III, Scene V)

Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

(Act III, Scene V)

Lady Capulet/Juliet's mother:

Nurse**, where's my daughter?** Call her forth to me.
This is the matter. Nurse, give leave awhile,
We must talk in secret. Nurse, come back again.

(Act I, Scene I)

Marry, that marry is the very theme
I came to talk of. **Tell me, daughter Juliet,**
How stands your disposition to be married ?

(Act I, Scene III)

Juliet:
I wonder at this haste, that I must wed
Ere he that should be husband comes to woo
I pray you tell my lord and father, madam,
I will not marry yet, and when I do, I swear
It shall be Romeo…

Lady Capulet/Juliet's mother:
Here comes your father, tell him so yourself,
And **see how he will take it at your hands**

(Act III, Scene IV)

Marry, my child, early next Thursday morn
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

(Act III, Scene V)

Juliet:
Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O sweet my mother, cast me not away,
Delay this marriage for a month, a week,
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

(Act III, Scene V)

2.   Friendship relationship:

Lady Capulet/Juliet's mother:
I tell thee what,—get thee to church a Thursday,
Or never after look me in the face.
Speak not, reply not, do not answer me.

(Act III, Scene V)

Juliet:
Madam, **I am here. What is your will?**

(Act I,Scene I)

Lady Capulet/Juliet's mother:
Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.

(Act III, Scene V)

4.   CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis show that in the relationship between parents and their daughters, it is a family relationship where the father and mother play a role in their daughter's life, including important decisions such as marriage being part of that role and not too concerned with the daughter's own feelings and choices. However, sometimes the relationship is like that of a friend so the words spoken are not too formal. That is a picture of family relationships from the drama Romeo and Juliet at that time which the playwright himself tried to show and has been analyzed by the writer through writing or research this time.

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