

# Social Identities in the Select Novels of Manju Kapur

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**B. Lingesaran, M.A., M. Phil., (F.T)**

*Research Scholar, Department of English (Aided)  
Kongunadu Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore*

**Dr. P. Chitra, M.A., M. Phil., Ph.D., PGDMT (Supervisor)**

*Assistant Professor of English, Department of English (Aided)  
Kongunadu Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore*

## Abstract

*India, Asia's subcontinent stands a powerful and multi cultured society through people follows various religion, language, traditions and culture. India's rich culture and traditions has become its identity in the diverse nation, although people are turning modern today, hold on to the moral values and custom. The culture in India is strongly from people's living, rituals, values, beliefs, habits, respect, care and knowledge, etc. .*

*This paper focuses on Indian culture with a strong emphasis on the different factors that shapes the traditions with social identity. The role of women, behavior of individuals, the place of the family, the community, marriage, cloths, jewellery, food habits and serving, restriction in social behavior, etc. are direct or indirect way.*

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Indian culture has its attachment to the tradition and with a strict code of conduct.

As Anthony Giddens says "In the tradition societies, the past is honored and symbols are valued. Tradition is a way of handling time and space, which inserts activity or experience of past, present and future structured by social practices". Elders are respected by following tradition generation to generation with strict code of conduct.

The Indian community the self includes the family and liked the identity of the family. Each community shows a different code of conduct and each will determine a particular hierarchy and social consideration. The individuals can behave in a particular way but he or she will also be judged by the members of the family.

The situation of women in India has always been contradictory. On the one hand Indian women are deprived of their freedom because of the patriarchal system, but on the other the regarded as a symbol energy and prosperity. The tradition culture of India is not surprising that main role of women is as a mother, child bearing and her tie with the family. As a result they have to respond to a strict code of conduct but they are also expected to perform a larger number of duties than men with subsequent restriction of personal freedom.

Indian women's capacity for self sacrifice, stickiness and discipline they grow and develop as stronger human beings able to overcome any adverse situations. Mothers are regarded as the first teachers for their descendants; they are the transmitters of tradition. It is true that if a woman in India goes against tradition is disowned and looked down. It can be exemplified in the following quotation.

When an Indian women sees another women goes against the system, who as flouted the Indian way, inside they secretly admire her enviously imagine what being free would be like. Inside they questions themselves: why did I have to be born Indian? But outside they keep up the facade, they pretend life is good and they shrug off words like 'love', 'happiness' and 'freedom'.

According to many sastra, the women must be honoured and adorned by her father, brother, brother and sister-in-laws welfare in the family, where the husband is pleased with his wife and wife with her husband, happiness will assured.

The individual's identity is not conceived without the family. The roles of Individual within the family are numerous. The family is not united by the boundaries as a nuclear family unit, rather it tends to encompass grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousin relationships are hierarchical not only between sexes but also generations. This exemplified mostly in the novels of Manju Kapur. The joint family system, which represents the emotional stability to family with extended traditional family values. Citizens of India respect elders whose advice is a high priority to safeguard family values.

It is questioned here that who to understand parents? This question responds one of the universal concern any society regardless of culture. Therefore appositions of parents are evident from the characters in Kapur's novel. Kapur's portrayal of relationship between mother and daughters matches the prevalent idea in the literature. The beginning of the novel *Difficult Daughter* (1998) is as follow,

‘the only thing I wanted was not to be like my mother’ (DD 1998:1)

At the same time as regards to the respect of parents, the following quotation is evident

Son, why do you quarrel with your father,

Due to him you have drown to this age

It is a sin to argue with him.

It is considered that the highest duty of the all castes, even weak husbands must strive to guard their wife, he who carefully guards his wife, preserves the purity of his offspring, virtuous conduct, his family, himself in the means of acquiring merit in the society. It is his duty to bring wealth to his family includes jewels, cloths and proper food. The traditional clothing is distinguished and are recognized all over the world.

It is true that there is a restriction in social behavior. For example, it is advisable to stand quite away while talking in a meeting with elders is a sign of respect to keep their personal space.

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It is not wonder, that any language is spoken, whatever be the religion practiced, people of any race are welcomed to live freely in the diversified land of India. People always hold their social status by following tradition and family values, being an good parents bringing their offspring through proper education. The citizen of India is admired by the world. Universally the Indian families try to protect their social identity through proper and prestigious living.

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