

## ROLE OF FEMALE CHARACTERS IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY FROM PAGE TO THE SCREEN

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### Abstract

*William Shakespeare has a great impact on the theatres and plays of the entire world. His plays present a lively and realistic interpretation of the relationship between men and women. Shakespeare became one of the best dramatists when England was flourishing under the reign of Queen Elizabeth who loved literature and encouraged literary activities. At that time, the Elizabethan era was witnessing a great transition, especially for women. Despite having a female monarch, the role and characterization of women during that time were dehumanizing. Women were recognized as inferiors in a male-dominated society. During Shakespeare's time, women did not enjoy social, political and economical parity with men. Shakespeare presented female characters playing a very crucial role in his plays, especially in his tragedies i.e. Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth. However, it is noteworthy that there has been a lot of research on Shakespeare's tragic heroes but the female characters despite their centrality in the tragedies remain sidelined in academia. In modern times, Vishal Bhardwaj has delineated Shakespeare's female characters in his adapted trilogy Maqbool, Omkara and Haider from a different angle. Bhardwaj has skillfully portrayed the female protagonists of Shakespeare's tragedies in a very microscopic way. He has given Shakespeare's tragic heroines more empowered status and active roles in his worldwide acclaimed Shakespearean trilogy. This paper comparatively analyzes how Shakespeare's 16<sup>th</sup>-century tragic heroines are transformed and presented on the 21st-century cinema screen.*

**Keywords:** Adapted movies; Elizabethan; Female characters; Shakespeare's plays; Transformation.