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**Exploring Discursive Construction of Queer Identity and its Socio-cultural Challenges  
in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies***

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**Abstract**

The researchers in this study use critical stylistic analysis to analyze the purposefully selected passages taken from SJ Sindu's *Marriage of a Thousand Lies* emphasizing how queer identities are discursively constructed. The chosen novel presents the story of Lucky, the main character, as her struggle to negotiate her queer identity in the constraints of a traditional Sri Lankan Tamil society that has immigrated to the United States. This research paper presents how Sindu challenges social convention and traditional norms and portrays the difficulties of queer experiences through a thorough analysis of the writer's linguistic decisions, narrative strategies and theme development. This study also contributes to our understanding of how literature can express and define queer identities in the context of diasporas and cultural settings by closely examining the issues of societal and cultural expectation, personal autonomy and identity development. The researchers use queer theory as theoretical foundation for this study. Furthermore, the researchers use Critical stylistics, a study approach of data analysis that focuses on analyzing a text's linguistic and stylistic elements to comprehend texts' deeper meanings. The purposefully selected passages for this study are analyzed in lights of Lesley Jeffries' ten analytical tools. Both primary and secondary sources are used to obtain data for this study.

**Keywords:** Queer Identity, Queer Theory, Critical Stylistics

**Introduction**

Queer fiction in recent years as literary genre emerged as an effective tool, challenging societal conventions about gender and sexuality. This genre offers to minority voices, a medium to talk about heteronormative societal conceptions, to communicate their particular experiences, and also to discuss their identities (Butler, 1990; Sedgwick, 1990). SJ Sindu does an incredible job of portraying queer identities and issues in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*. Queer characters face many issues while negotiating their true identities in the novel. All together, the novel chosen for this study offers a comprehensive analysis of the queer characters and the issues experienced by these characters while negotiating their true identities in traditional and cultural settings.

The depiction of lesbianism in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies* centres on Lucky, the main character and a lesbian woman. According to K. Rupa Shree the term "lesbian" is taken from 'Lesbos, the name of a Greek island where the poetess Sappho lived. Her poems often articulated desires between women. So lesbianism is derived from the word lesbian, while sapphism is derived from Sappho; both words are linked with female homosexuality. Lesbianism and sapphism are two words that describe a woman's homosexuality. However, the term 'lesbianism' first appeared in the 1890s and became commonly used by the public. Lesbianism is defined as a close emotional or romantic relationship and interpersonal contact between two women. Women with this sexual orientation are known as lesbians, tribade, gay women, sapphic, and dyke (Rupa shree, 2022). Lucky as queer woman, in the context of religiously strict Sri Lankan-American culture, experiences many difficulties and troubles as she negotiates her true sexual orientation. Lucky has spent her whole life playing the part of a heterosexual woman in her family. She enters into marriage with gay man Kris who hides her true sexual orientation from the heteronormativity of the Sri Lankan culture and tradition. Lucky wants to make a life with Nisha. Nisha and Lucky continue to have a secret, loving relationship.

Lucky and Nisha were caught sleeping naked when Nisha's mother entered home, putting an end to their game of pretending to be straight women.

The difficulties that the characters have in matching their queer identities with their cultural backgrounds are mirrored in the novel's language, which form their experiences. The chief character, Lucky, manages the conflict between her lesbian identity and the burden of her traditional Sri Lankan family. The dual nature of Lucky's identity—the conflict between her cultural roots and her inner truth—is portrayed in the novel by means of the employment of both the English and Tamil languages. The use of language in the novel is a means of self-expression. Language becomes a way for the characters to express their desires, emotions, and inner struggles, particularly for those who identify as queer. The characters discover their true identities in spite of pressure from society to fit in by having close chats about their sexualities through their dialogue and internal monologues. Tierney and Dilley (1998), state that notion of gay identity or LGBT identity is not simply about the rights to discuss but it also involves and takes into account the connection between identity and authority, additionally, to how institutions control and legitimize certain narratives (Tierney & Dilley, 1998). The characters are able to confirm their identities and fight the restriction forced by cultural and societal standards by using language as a form of resistance.

Motschenbacher also asserts that different ways of using language add to the discursive development of identity and desires. Labels like heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual are clear examples of how language constructs sexual identities. It is also probable to argue that gendered specific names and pronouns such as (e.g. woman, man; girl, boy; she, he) facilitate to create binary gendered identities. Similarly, stereotypically gendered speech styles follow a similar process (Motschenbacher, 2007). Language has been conceived to play an essential part in the portrayal and expression of non-normative sexual identities, all of which are often stigmatized to varying degrees. When I use the word "non-normative sexual identities," I'm referring to those individuals who identifies as queer or homosexuals and intersex, also known as LGBTQ. These identities jointly pose a risk to the dominant heteronormativity, which has been distinct as Cameron and Kulick (2003), states that heterosexuality is mostly maintained and produce by the structure, institution, connection and behaviors that make it look like natural, obvious, appealing, favored, and inevitable (Cameron & Kulick, 2003).

Queen (1997), asserted a different perspective regarding the use of lesbian language, suggesting that lesbians can recognize each other and articulate their identity through a distinctive combination of linguistic elements, rather than simple connection with the lesbian community, it's the dynamic interaction of a variety of linguistic styles available to lesbians that gives their languages its distinctive character. Queen (1997), summarizes four strategies lesbians use in their language.

The novel's depiction of queer issues and identities is notably influenced by language used in the novel; language considerably contributes to the presentation of queer concerns and identities by influencing the experiences of the characters, promoting self-expression, and confronting social conventions. According to Giffney (2009), analysis of discourse is practiced in queer theory. The power and significance of language and value of words are taken very seriously (Giffney, 2009). According to Llamas et al (2010), Language not only reflects who we are and a means to define who we are; in some respects, language is who we are. This bond between language and identity has been called a basic characteristic of human experience (Llamas et al, 2010). According to Sauntson (2008), the first to study the link between language, gender and sexuality is queer linguistic: a developing field allied to Queer Theory (Sauntson 2008).

#### **Research Question**

- How are queer identities discursively constructed in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*?

#### **Research Objective**

- To analyze how queer identities are discursively constructed in the novel under study.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The researchers in this study examine how queer identities and its related issues queer individuals experience while negotiating their true sexual orientation are discursively portrayed in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*. Queer people hide their identities due to cultural and societal constraints. The characters of Kris and Lucky in the novel struggle with their identities due to the familial and societal pressure and expectations. Kris and lucky conceal their real identities in order to live up to the expectation of their communities and families. Moreover, the researchers investigate Lucky's self-

acceptance and self-realization because in the novel Lucky resist her own desires, and also oppose her true sexual orientation. Queer people face these issues in real life too, so the researchers study these issues in the context of the novel. For this purpose, the researchers use Queer theory as a theoretical framework in this study. The aim of the study is to focus on the narrative and linguistic devices used to depict LGBTQ relationships, experiences and issues. For this purpose, the researcher uses Critical Stylistics analysis as a method for data analysis, Lesley Jeffries' (2010) ten tools are used by the researchers to analyze the purposely selected passages for this study.

### **Literature Review**

This section first discusses queer theory as the theoretical framework employed in this study, as well as the study's central methodology, critical stylistic analysis, which the researchers used in this study as an approach to investigate the relationship between literature and language. It is sub field of linguistics. It is also used to uncover the intention of writer and the subsequent effect on the reader. This method focus more on the language components of text, for instance metaphors, narrative perspective dialogues, and dialogues (Short, 1996).this approach when used allow the comprehensive examination of the language used to depict queer concerns and identities is a useful method of assessing queer literature. Butler (1990) and Sedgwick (1990), presented the view that emergence of queer literature has challenged and also changed the ideas about gender and sexuality. The works of other two writers, Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick offered the concepts of epistemology of the closet and gender performativity which plays an important role in influencing queer literary studies. Butler concept of performativity suggests that gender and sexuality are socially constructed, an individual construct gender identity through persistent acts and behaviors (Butler, 1990). She makes an argument in her, *Gender Trouble*, "there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very, expressions that are said to be its results" (p.33). On the other hand Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick presents the idea of epistemology of the closet which examines the problems and difficulties encounter by queer people of being in closet and coming out to other.

Since the biological view of sexual behaviour is rejected, and it has no original, the concept of lesbianism is also beyond the notion of unchanging and permanent. And individual sexual behaviour is not inherited or, it is not innate, Butler asserted "Sexual orientation might be the result of repetition of specific acts. Heterosexual, or gay or lesbian acts are copies of which there are no original; like gender, sexuality is social construction" (As cited in Carter 2006, pp.128-129).gender and sexuality are socially constructed and not inherited, or natural. Times New Roman

The concept of "epistemology of the closet" which is put forward by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick look into the difficulties of the process to disclose the identity or come out and being remain in the closet and shows the societal norms and expectation influence and affect LGBT people's revealing of their identities (Sedgwick, 1990). Queer literature dissident ability to fight and challenge the conventional narratives is emphasized by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick writing.

Since queer theory is focused on capturing the gender identity problem in those who identify as queer, this theory is the ideal tool for analyzing literary works with queer identities and issues.

### **Queer Identity**

The term queer identity is referring to those sexualities that are considered abnormal, and different from the heterosexual norm. Even though, calling these varying sexualities "queer" may at first hit one as the height of heterosexual assumption, the term was first popularized by gay men in New York at the turn of the 20th century who used it as a code word to illustrate their sexuality. Therefore, the term "queer identity" has a wider definition than "homosexuality" or "lesbianism," which are both usually restricted to the idea of rather prejudiced and stigmatized sexual experience with a person of the same sex. In contraction, the term queer identity presents a more extensive notion of sexuality that need not be limited to a sexual viewpoint. The term queer identity is used as a wide term which includes all pattern of behaviour that do not complies with the predetermined tag of sexual identities, conceptualize sexuality as groupings between people of the same sex that permit them to provide and get practical and political support also share a rich inner life. Reading texts for their depiction of gay/queer identities using such a comprehensive definition of sexuality as entailed by the term "queer identity" suggest a freer and more unrestrained interpretive strategy, which help to uncover the covered up narratives of the forbidden relations between members of the same sex (Cited in Siriwardena, 2017,p.2).

The notion of queer identity is complicated and multidimensional which involves different ideas, feelings and experiences in connection to gender and sexual orientation. It is crucial that the discussion concerning queer identity should be approached with respect, frankness, and a desire to learn and grasp. The term queer is a broader term used to represent non-normative sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions. All identities including gay, lesbian, etc come under umbrella term queer but this term is not limited to only these identities. Queer people stress variability and variety while fighting and challenging conventional notion of sexuality and gender.

Sexual orientation, which portrays a person's emotional, passionate, and sexual preferences, often linked with queer identity. Gay (attraction to the same gender), lesbian (attraction between women), bisexual (attraction to both same and different genders), pansexual (attraction regardless of gender), asexual (absence of sexual attraction), and other sexual orientations are included in the queer community.

According to Sauntson (2008), the first to study the link between language, gender and sexuality is Queer Linguistic; a developing field allied to Queer Theory (Sauntson, 2008).By using language people can communicate their sexual identities and also communicate with one another. The capability to communicate one's identity to other people and to oneself need the use of term such as "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," "transgender," and "queer," among others. People understanding and communication of their sexual identities may be very much impacted by the availability and acceptance of these terms within a society. By changing the vocabulary use to describe sexual identities, many sexual orientations and gender identities can be made more visible and accepted in society. Besides promotion, a more comprehensive and expanded knowledge of human experiences, inclusive language can help fight stigma, discrimination, and misinformation. According to Queen (2002), it has been proposed that studying language and sexuality has huge possibility to extensively improve the more common study of language, culture, and society and that realizing this possibility is within our reach (Queen, 2002).

According to the Cass model of sexual identity development, there are six interactional stages that take place while sexual identity develops. People might feel they are gay in stage one identity confusion. People may act straight during stage two, identity comparison, during which they compare themselves to others. People judge they are gay while they are at stage three, identity tolerance. One adds a tag during stage four, "accepting one's identity." People go through stage five, where they become activists and gain pride. Non-straight persons see being non-straight as only one component of themselves during stage six, identity synthesis (Cass, 1979).

Coleman put forward a model regarding adolescent gay and lesbian identity. The five stages of connection are highlighted by Coleman's (1982) model. People may think they are gay in stage one, sometimes known as the pre-coming out stage, in stage two which is also known as coming out stage ,people express their feelings regarding same gender attraction, People date all through stage three, known as the exploration period, and if they are teenagers, they may display impairment in sexual exploration. Intimacy is wanted after at stage four, the initial stage of a relationship. The integration stage, also known as stage five, is where personal and professional life is combined (Coleman, 1982).

#### **Problems Experience by Queer Individuals while Negotiating True Identity**

An important issues experienced by queer people is being in the closet or hiding their true sexual orientation from others. Those individuals who try to hide their true non-heterosexual orientation from their friends, family, and society are sometimes referred to as being in the "closet". According to Walczk (2014), it is difficult for the queer individuals to disclose their true sexual orientation and gender identity publically due the established homophobia in the society (Walczk 2014). Queer people are compelled to hide their true sexual orientation in order to prevent and avoid homophobia, prejudice, and discrimination they face in society. When individuals are in the closet, they might decide to only disclose their true identities to their close friends and/or romantic partners, or they might not to tell anyone at all. Such as they might keep sexual activity with total strangers or wholly wear clothing intended for a different gender in private (Resnick, 2021).

An important segment of one's identity and the way of life is suppressed when they try to keep hiding their true identities or remained in the closet. Concealing one's true identity is connected with reduced well-being (Riggle, Rostosky, Black, & Rosenkrantz, 2007).Individuals who identify as gay lesbian, or LGBT individuals have experienced subjugation for the most part of modern history, and this suppression, prejudice, and discrimination might be internalized by LGBT individuals to the

extent that a queer woman may not even be ready to admit to herself that she is attracted to women. Because of the fear of being rejected or fear of being different from others, most of LGBT individuals remain in the closet, which keeps them stuck in a homophobic mental prison.

Other important issues related to queer identity is the act of Coming out which is deeply personal experience for an individual. This process involves self-realization and acceptance of one's true self, and often a long period of introspection. People choose to come out for many reasons, including being true to one's self who they are, seeking people's approval, making genuine relationships and avoiding mental and emotional stress due to keeping their identity as secret. The concerns about how the family members, friends, peers may respond make the decision to disclose true identity or coming out very difficult and stressful (Nesmith et al., 1999).

According to many studies, those young adults who bear psychological, physical, or sexual anti-LGB oppression are more likely to develop depression, exhibit more PTSD symptoms, ponder and try suicide, and more publicly cut off than their straight peers (Button et al., 2012; Dürrbaum & Sattler, 2020; 1999; Wright & Perry, 2006). According to Grossman and Kerner, (1998), Young adults who experience self-hatred may consequently choose to hide their sexual orientation and not to disclose to others, which further separate them (Grossman & Kerner, 1998).

Some LGB young adults hesitate to disclose their identities to others because of fear for losing the support of their family members or friends in addition to fear of losing their homes as result of being disowned (Goldfried & Goldfried, 2001). Homelessness among LGB people remains a concern.

### **Research Method for Data Analysis**

Critical Stylistic Analysis, as a research method, depicts the author's stylistic choices and the hidden layers of meaning in a literary work, such as a novel. A detailed assessment of the how language as a tool is employed to portray queer concerns and identities within the context of queer literary analysis is provided by using Critical stylistic analysis.

The researcher in this study employed Lesley Jeffries' (2010), ten analytical tools to analyze the selected passage taken from the novel *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*. Lesley Jeffries (2010), illustrates critical stylistics as a collection of ten analytical toolkits that look at both the ideology conveyed in literary works and the ideology ingrained in language (Jeffries 2010, pp. 1–16). These ten tools are Naming and Describing, Expressing Actions/Occurrences/States, Comparing and Contrasting, Exemplifying and Enumerating, Prioritizing, Assuming and Implying, Negating, Hypothesizing, Conveying the Words and Thoughts of Other Individuals, Representing Time, Space and Society.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

The researchers in this section analyzed and discussed the purposefully selected passage to investigate and answer the research question outlined in this study. The researchers in this study examined the selected passage in light of queer theory. Lesley Jeffries' (2010), ten tools are employed by the researchers to examine the selected passage.

#### **Critical Stylistic Analysis of Queer Identity in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies***

The passage under study is a dialogue between Lucky and her mother, Amma. The passage highlights the tension between personal identity and parental and societal expectations. The critical stylistic analysis of the below selected passage as written in Italics for the readers convenience shows how the text producer discursively constructed the queer identity and its related issues such as parental and societal expectations in the text which answer the research questions outlined in this study.

*“Was it my fault?” she asks. “Did I make you like this?” “It’s not your fault.” She bends toward me, crumples at the waist and cries into the snow. “The community will hate you,” she says. “They’ll blame you for driving away a good man like Kris.” The snow is melting through my saree. “Amma, Kris likes men. And I don’t.” She shakes her head. “This isn’t supposed to be your story. Not my daughter.” She sounds more sad than angry.”*(Sindu, 2017, pp. 207-208).

The researchers use Lesley Jeffries (2010), ten tools to carry out the Critical stylistic analysis of the passage under study. The Researcher first applies the tool of naming and describing, to analyze how the writer conveys the meaning through naming and description. The author in the passage under study uses the names such as "Kris" and "Amma" which are very significant and also contribute to the social and cultural background of the text. These mentioned names in passage hold familial and cultural importance, also added to the meaning of the text. The writer employs of the personal

pronoun in the passage for example "I," "you," and "Amma," create a clear relationship dynamics. It is noteworthy that the name "Kris" is used in the passage since it designates a character who serves as the main topic of discussion. The repetition of the name "Kris" is also important. Because the name becomes a representation of cultural standards and expectations, stressing the pressure on people to follow a defined view of what makes a "good man." The author also uses a term "community" in passage to name the societal structure, which highlights the societal and collective influence on individuals and their lives. Amma's statement, "The community will hate you," discloses a fear of societal standards and judgment. This statement shows and reflects the particular difficulties faced by the LGBT individuals but also communicate wider queer issues of societal standards and expectations related to queer identity.

Secondly, the researchers analyze the passage under study by applying the Lesley Jeffries (2010), tool Representing Actions/Events/States. The passage under examination includes many verbs that portray actions. For examples, "asks," "cries," "blame," "driving away," "likes," and "shake" are all verbs representing various actions performed by the characters. The dialogue tags like "she says" and "she asks" are used to highlight the speaking and questioning behaviors of the characters. The dialogue between Lucky and her mother in the passage includes a mix of past tense verbs "cried," "blame," "shakes" and present tense verbs "asks," "make," "isn't supposed to be". This combination of present and past tense adds to the complexity of the narrative. The author use of the word "fault" repeatedly stress on the characters' psychological struggle and possible attribution of blame. Lucky's statement in the passage, "The snow is melting through my saree," which symbolizes both a metaphorical condition (the melting snow) and a physical state (Lucky's helplessness or emotional thawing).

Thirdly, the researchers focus on finding the author's instances of equality and contrast in the passage under study by applying the Lesley Jeffries (2010), tool Equating and Contrasting. The line in the passage under examination "The snow is melting through my saree" metaphorically equates the melting snow with the emotional chaos of the Lucky. The intensity of the event is reinforced when the physical environment are equated with the emotional state. Lucky's mother response. "This isn't supposed to be your story. Not my daughter," establish an equation between fixed narrative expected by society and her daughter's identity. The mother's melancholy highlights even more how cultural expectations and individual truths collide. Lucky's mother dialogue in the passage, "The community will hate you," she says. "They'll blame you for driving away a good man like Kris," indicates a contrast between the real identity of her daughter Lucky and the mother perception of the societal standards and norms.

The researchers further apply the Lesley Jeffries' tool of Exemplifying and Enumerating to analyze the passage under study. The writer in the passage under examination uses various exemplifications through characters dialogues to exemplify the emotional tension between Lucky and her mother. Lucky's mother questions such as "was it my fault? Did I make you like this?" serves as an exemplification of the mother's effort to realize and maybe accept her daughter, Lucky sexual orientation. In response Lucky states, "not your fault," exemplifies Lucky attempt to communicate to her mother that this is not her fault. The mother's statement, "The community will hate you. They'll blame you for driving away a good man like Kris," enumerates possible negative outcomes that the Lucky might face, while Lucky's revelation, "Amma, Kris likes men. And I don't," enumerates an obvious contrast in sexual orientation between the Lucky and Kris.

The researchers also analyze the passage under study using Lesley Jeffries' (2010), tool of Prioritizing. Use of direct speech, denoted by quotation marks is prioritizing technique. The main focus of the conversation between the characters is the daughter's questions and the mother's emotional answer. This emphasizes the scene's emotional intensity and interpersonal turmoil.

Furthermore, the researchers analyze the passage by using and applying the Lesley Jeffries (2010), tool of Assuming and Implying, which involves examining the implicit meanings, assumptions. The passage under study shows that Lucky's mother assumes that the community will charge Lucky for driving away a "good man like Kris." This assumption reflects societal standards, expectations and prejudices. Lucky assumes that her mother will reject of her sexual orientation. This assumption is communicates through her statement, "This isn't supposed to be your story. Not my daughter." The Lucky's response to her mother, "Amma, Kris likes men. And I don't," implies that Kris is gay, and Lucky is not interested in men romantically. "They'll blame you for driving away a

good man like Kris," the mother says, alluding to social pressure and condemnation as well as the expectation that people should adhere to certain conventions, even if it means hiding their own selves. The mother's comment, "This isn't supposed to be your story. Not my daughter," implies a sense of disappointment and societal pressure.

The researchers then apply the Lesley Jeffries' tool of Negation to analyze the passage under study. Lucky's response to her mother question in the passage under examination, "It's not your fault." Which shows that Lucky refute that it is her mother fault, using a direct negation. Lucky's mother statement in the passage, "This isn't supposed to be your story." Shows that he mother refuse the situation and express her displeasure of the daughter's reality. "Fault," "blame," and "driving away" are examples of negative language that adds to the tone of negativity and conveys a sense of guilt or accountability. Lucky statement, "Amma, Kris likes men. And I don't." -Lucky uses contrastive negation to highlight the difference between her sexual orientation and Kris's.

Moreover, the researchers analyze the passage under study by using Lesley Jeffries' (2010), another tool of Hypothesizing. The mother's statement in the passage, "The community will hate you," uses modal language to predict future consequences. It suggests that if Lucky doesn't comply with societal norms, the society won't accept her. This statement conveys a strong tone and an air of certainty or inevitability. This might serve as a metaphor for cultural expectations and the possible repercussions the daughter might experience.

The researchers in the last analyze the passage under study by applying the Lesley Jeffries' (2010), tools of presenting others' speech and thoughts, Representing Time, Space and Society. There is direct speech as well as reported speech in the passage under consideration. The queries "Did I make you like this?" and "Was it my fault?" are asked directly to Lucky Mother, demonstrating direct speaking. However, the statements "Amma, Kris likes men" and "It's not your fault" are noteworthy. Additionally, I don't have the narrator describe the lines that the characters say which is known as reported speech. Words in deixis are interpretable only in relation to their context. "This" refers to the sentence "Did I make you like this?" in the passage and "This isn't supposed to be your story. Not my daughter" emphasizes the dialogues emotional impact by pointing to an unidentified circumstance or state.

### **Conclusion**

In this section of the research the researchers conclude the discussion on researcher question as outlined above and presented research findings. The discursive construction of Queer Identities in *Marriage of a Thousands Lies* is situated in the expectation and societal norms, presenting the difficulties and challenges encountered by queer individuals, such as, Lucky as she attempts to reconcile her true self with the familial and societal expectations. The novel presents the queer character in the cultural context and expectations that culture place on queer people, specifically in the setting of a traditional South Asian society. The main character in the novel, Lucky as well as Nisha caught between these expectations and the reality of their lesbian identities, the main character Lucky finds herself torn. The discourse regarding these aspects highlights the troubles and challenges encountered by queer individuals within conservative cultural background.

The author's discursive construction of queer identities in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies* includes the depiction of queer people living double life. Lucky and Nisha like many individuals in their community, hide their true identities in order to live up to the expectation of their families and society. The main point in Lucky's journey is her internal battle to accept her true queer identity. The novel under study also offers societal stigma attached to queer identities. The researchers in the research examined the writer's discursive construction of struggle encountered by queer characters against societal expectations. The novel under study specifically portrayed that how queer individuals faced stigma in the Sri Lankan-American community. The Lucky's character in the novel hide her true identity and lives a double life due to the fear of familial and societal rejection. The Family and Societal context play a vital role in the author's discursive construction of queer identities and the issues they experienced in the novel. The researchers investigated in detailed the issues faced by queer characters from rejection to acceptance of the community for queer people. The lesbian identity of Lucky is shaped by her connection with her family. The familial expectation and the challenges encounter by queer people in finding acceptance in community are constructed discursively by the author in *Marriage of a Thousand Lies*. The response of the Sri Lankan-American community to the sexual orientation of Lucky plays an important role in the discursive construction of queer identities in

the novel. The novel also depicts the challenges that LGBT individuals faced in a society that may not fully accepting and understanding them.

#### Future Research Recommendations

This study only analyzes the discursive construction of queer identities and its related issues. Researchers can further conduct the researches studies on different perspectives. Firstly, a researcher may examine how the language of the novel intersects queer identity with other social categories such as race, ethnicity, class, and religion or examine the intersections of queer identity with other social categories. Secondly, using reader-response methodologies like focus groups, surveys, and interviews, would make clear a range of readings and reactions to the work and offer broader view of how readers connect with the story's representations of marriage and queerness. Thirdly, researchers may examine the performative aspects of gender and sexuality as well as the power dynamics present in the discourse of the text by incorporating queer theory frameworks.

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