



## **Representation Of Disability In Temple Grandin's *Emergence***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Literature is the vehicle of expression and also a noble path to explore the past, analyses the present and creates the future. Disabled people are the most poor and disempowered groups. Disability doesn't exist in the person instead it is a social and cultural construct. Disability studies itself an academic discipline that examines the nature and consequences of disability and gives voices to disable. Disability studies emerged in the west as a result of the success of the disability rights movement and the writers have also started giving attention to the disabled by representing them in their works. Recently disabled persons draw attention of the people to gain individual identity. Societal attitude towards the disabled people has changed during the course of time. This paper highlights the representation of disability in Temple Grandin's fiction *Emergence*.

Key Words:

Disabled, rehabilitation, emergence, social and cultural context.

### **Introduction:**

Literature is the vehicle of expressions, it express authors own ideas, personal thoughts and perceptions. Literature is a self-contained entity, and categorize the social, historical and cultural background of the different periods or ages, a kind of catharsis which purifies the mind of the readers and relieves from the pressure of emotions. It is a noble path to explore the past, analyses the present and creates the future.

Disability studies is a new area of academic inquiry which sounds the humanities and rehabilitation of the societies, it also gives voices to disabled to prove



that it doesn't mean the person with disability is unable to perform. Disability means a person with long-term physical, mental or sensory impairments which hinder their full and effective participation, which makes them treated differently by the common people. They look at disability as a special category. Disability studies focus on how disability is defined and represented in society. It generally refers to the examination of disability as a social, cultural and political phenomenon. Disability is a problem that is fixed within a social and cultural context. This paper begins with the introduction of disability and portrays how the author highlights the representation of disability in her book *Emergence*. According to Petra Koppers,

Disability culture is the difference between being alone, isolated, and individual with a physical, cognitive, emotional or sensory difference that in our society invites discrimination and reinforces that isolation—the differences between all that and being in community. Naming oneself part of a larger group, a social movement or a subject position in modernity can help to focus energy, and to understand the solidarity can be found—precariously, in improvisation, always on the verge of collapse. (109)

Temple Grandin's *Emergence* is an exceptional inspiring novel based on a true story. *Emergence* is an autobiographical novel of a courageous autistic woman who beat all the odds in her life to overcome the diseases. She writes so honestly about how she grew into her autistic self and cured it. Generally, autistic people never emerge from their handicap in order to communicate, but Temple is an extraordinary case in the world of autistics. Because the autistic people do not learn to speak and write but Temple is somewhat different from others. The novel clearly explores the importance of parental care, who can see into the heart of their child, even though the child is hard to deal with their autistic behaviours. At the age of three, Temple slowly starts speaking, till that she used to scream to get what she wants. Even though she is an autistic child, her father decides to give her education which he thinks will improve her slowly.



As a child, Temple was forced to enroll in a school for autistic children. In the novel, she describes her memories being teased by other children and also explains the feelings which hurts her deeply, and tells about the problems like lack of speech, auditory problems, and tactile problems, But also she describes the significant mentors and the persons who helped her to overcome all her struggles. She tells about her slow improvement in the book which gives an inspiration for both autistic children and their parents. She says that after taking the antidepressants at the age of eight there has been a steady improvement in her speech, sociability, and posture. Her friend Billie Hart told her that she had improved a lot and her another friend Lorna King also noticed many changes in Temple, Lorna says, “Your speech used to seem pressured, coming in almost explosive bursts. Your old tendency to perseverate is gone.” (90). Temple says that many people asked her how she overcomes the diseases for that she says that she is blessed with the right people at the right time, at the age of two she had all the typical symptoms of autistic. But her mother helped her to recover and in her school and college days she was helped by the most creative and unconventional thinkers. She realizes that autistics could have excellent careers if they had a person to take an interest in them.

In the novel she has represented disability in a varied way most of the people thought that disability needs to be treated differently and they were unable to perform like normal human beings. Temple thinks that literature plays an important role in the life of people so that she thought of writing her own story to prove that disabled people don't want to be treated differently and they can also overcome their disabilities. The book highlights the odds she faced during her lifetime as an autistic child, teenager, college student and even in her career as a successful livestock designer. She clearly conveys the reason for her successful emergence is that how she fought all her odds with the help of her family, mentors and the most important thing is that the inner strength and perseverance that she possessed to overcome the disability.

Disability studies has contemporary relevance because it helps the people with physical or mental disabilities to occupy an important position in society and to

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establish their equality and self-esteem. It also generates not sympathy but empathy for the people with disability. Through this novel she conveys that the most fundamental thing is to re-imagine the people with disabilities and also it portrays that the disabled people have their own power to create their own self and identity.

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