

Women's Condition in Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract— This study critically analyses women's condition in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Set against the backdrop of the Victorian era, a period defined by strict social norms and profound gender inequalities, the novel sheds light on women's living conditions through the protagonist's journey from a marginalized orphan to an independent woman. Drawing on feminist and literary theories, this research explores how the narrative portrays female oppression through restricted educational access, economic dependence, and rigid societal expectations. Furthermore, it highlights the various strategies used by female characters to assert their identities and independence. The analysis contrasts Jane's trajectory toward autonomy and love with the experience of Bertha Mason, who embodies an alternative, more tragic facet of Victorian womanhood. The findings reveal that Brontë uses her narrative as a means of depicting the hardships faced by women, positioning Jane's resilience, moral strength, and persistent desire for equality as a powerful symbol of resistance against patriarchal norms. Ultimately, this paper demonstrates that *Jane Eyre* not only critiques the historical condition of women but also advocates for female emancipation through education, self-determination, and personal integrity.

Keywords— Women, Oppression, Independence, Feminism, Victorian Society.

I. INTRODUCTION

The condition of women has long been a major concern in both literature and society. Throughout history, women have faced numerous forms of discrimination, including limited access to education, economic dependence on men, and strict social restrictions. During the nineteenth century, particularly in Victorian England, women were expected to conform to rigid norms that confined them to domestic roles and denied them any significant opportunity for personal development or public recognition. Society imposed a clearly defined image of femininity based on submission, obedience, and silence. Literature from this period both reflected and questioned these realities, making it a privileged space for examining gender inequality.

Although *Jane Eyre* is frequently regarded as a landmark novel of female emancipation, it also portrays women who remain deeply constrained by patriarchal authority and social expectations. The heroine's journey raises fundamental questions about freedom, identity, and equality. This contradiction leads to a central research question: How is the condition of women portrayed in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, and what does it reveal about the social realities of Victorian society?

It is within this social and historical context that Charlotte Brontë wrote *Jane Eyre*, one of the most influential novels of Victorian literature, published in 1847. The novel narrates the life of Jane, an orphan who struggles to overcome social, economic, and gender barriers in her quest for dignity, independence, and self-respect. Through Jane's experiences, Brontë exposes the difficulties faced by women in nineteenth-century England while simultaneously presenting a heroine who refuses to submit entirely to social conventions. This research, entitled "The Condition of Women in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: A Critical Analysis", aims to examine the representation of women in the novel and to analyse the various forms of oppression and emancipation experienced by its female characters.

In order to answer this research question, the study is organized into three chapters. The first chapter presents the research situation, including the research area, literature review, and main research questions. The second chapter focuses on the

theoretical framework and methodology adopted for the study. The third and final chapter is devoted to textual analysis and the interpretation of the findings.

II. THE RESEARCH SITUATION

2.1 Research Area

Far from a mathematical analysis, this piece of scholarship is a literary work that focuses on a close analysis of Charlotte Brontë's fictional work. Known as one of the key figures of British literature, she has been distinguished through her specific way of depicting the different social irregularities faced by women during the Victorian period, ranging from gender issues to women's marginalization. Thus, this study examines how women are represented in literary works, especially during the Victorian period. The nineteenth century was marked by strong social inequalities between men and women. Literature of that time often reflected these inequalities, but it also served as a means to question them. In this regard, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë provides a relevant framework for analysing the condition of women. This research therefore combines literary analysis with gender perspectives in order to better understand the position of women in society as portrayed in the novel.

2.2 Literature Review

Several scholars have analysed *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë from different perspectives, especially in relation to feminism, identity, and the condition of women in the nineteenth century.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), argue that the novel presents a tension between repression and self-expression. According to them, female characters reflect the difficulties faced by women in a patriarchal society. They also interpret Bertha Mason as a representation of suppressed anger and rebellion. Their analysis helps to better understand the psychological struggles experienced by women in the novel and the conflict between obedience and freedom.

Elaine Showalter, in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), focuses on the development of female identity in literature. She explains that women writers often use fiction to express personal experiences and to challenge traditional gender roles. This perspective is useful in analysing how Jane Eyre builds her identity despite social limitations and expectations imposed on women during the Victorian era.

Mary Wollstonecraft, in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), emphasizes the importance of education for women. She argues that education is essential for women's independence, dignity, and self-respect. This idea is reflected in *Jane Eyre*, where education plays a key role in Jane's personal development and allows her to gain a certain degree of autonomy.

Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex* (1949), explains that women are often considered as "the Other" in society. According to her, women are socially constructed as inferior and dependent on men. This concept can be applied to the novel, where female characters struggle to affirm their identity and to be recognized as equal human beings. Beauvoir's theory is important for understanding Jane's desire for equality and self-definition.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" (1985), analyses Bertha Mason from both feminist and postcolonial perspectives. She argues that Bertha represents not only female oppression but also colonial marginalization. According to Spivak, the novel reflects the silencing of certain women whose voices are excluded from society. This interpretation broadens the understanding of oppression in *Jane Eyre*.

These different contributions provide a better understanding of the condition of women in *Jane Eyre* and highlight the relevance of feminist criticism in the analysis of the novel.

2.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

2.3.1 Research Questions

The main questions guiding this research are:

- **Q1:** How does Brontë depict Victorian women's condition throughout *Jane Eyre*?
- **Q2:** In what ways are women oppressed in the novel?
- **Q3:** How do social class and gender influence women's lives?

2.3.2 Research Hypotheses

In response to the above questions, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- **H1:** *Jane Eyre* presents women as oppressed human beings dominated by men in a patriarchal society.
- **H2:** Women are socially and economically dependent on men.
- **H3:** *Jane Eyre* challenges traditional gender roles.

2.3.3 Objectives of the Research

The primary objective driving this research is to depict the unpleasant condition of women through an in-depth analysis of *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. This study also intends to examine the perpetual struggles faced by British women through the character of Jane without ignoring the themes of oppression and resistance. Highlighting the evolution of Jane as a woman is obviously a tangible proof of Victorian women's determination for self-emancipation.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theoretical orientation of the study as well as the main concepts used to analyse the condition of women in *Jane Eyre*.

3.1.1 Theoretical Foundations of Research

In the framework of this research, two literary theories have been applied: Feminist Literary Theory and Marxist Literary Theory.

Feminist literary theory finds one of its principal foundations in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949). In this influential work, Beauvoir argues that women have historically been defined as inferior to men and treated as "the Other" within patriarchal societies. Feminist criticism therefore seeks to examine the representation of women in literary texts, expose gender inequalities, and analyse the mechanisms of female oppression and resistance. Elaine Showalter further developed feminist literary criticism in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), where she explored the evolution of women's writing and the construction of female identity in literature. This theory is particularly relevant to the present study because *Jane Eyre* portrays a woman's struggle for autonomy, dignity, and equality.

The study also draws on Marxist literary theory, which originates from the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, notably *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and *Das Kapital* (1867). Marxist criticism examines the influence of social class, economic power, and material conditions on human relationships. In literary studies, Terry Eagleton contributed significantly to the development of Marxist criticism through works such as *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (1976). This perspective helps explain how class structures and economic inequalities shape the experiences of literary characters. In *Jane Eyre*, Jane's position as a governess illustrates the effects of social hierarchy and economic dependence, making Marxist theory useful for understanding class inequality in the novel.

3.1.2 Additional Supporting Scholarship

This study is also informed by critical and literary responses that situate *Jane Eyre* within its own historical reception and its afterlife in later fiction, offering two further angles on the novel's treatment of women. When the novel first appeared, it provoked strong reactions precisely because of its heroine's independence. In a widely read notice for the *Quarterly Review*, Elizabeth Rigby (1848) condemned Jane as the embodiment of an undisciplined, rebellious spirit and denounced the novel as an anti-Christian composition, objecting above all to a heroine who judges for herself rather than submitting quietly to her station. Read today, this hostile contemporary verdict is itself useful evidence: it shows from outside the text how sharply Jane's assertiveness violated the behavioural norms expected of Victorian women, confirming what the novel argues from within.

The character of Bertha Mason has likewise continued to provoke critical and creative response well beyond Brontë's own century. Jean Rhys's novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) reimagines Bertha's earlier life under her birth name, Antoinette Cosway, giving voice and history to a figure who remains silent and marginal throughout *Jane Eyre*. Rhys's novel falls outside the primary text examined here, but its enduring influence confirms that Bertha's confinement and silence, discussed further in Chapter Three, have long been recognized as one of the novel's central unresolved tensions rather than a peripheral detail.

3.1.3 Clarification of Key Concepts

Before proceeding to the core of the topic, it is worth clarifying some key concepts that may help understand this study. First and foremost, feminism can be defined as a movement and a critical approach that seeks to understand and challenge gender inequality. Feminism intends to reject the supremacy of men in patriarchal societies.

However, patriarchy is a social system in which men hold power and dominate women in different aspects of life. This system does not facilitate women's emancipation. In such societies, men have total control over women. In such societies, women are voiceless and have no right to protest. Their place is generally in the kitchen or in the matrimonial homes where they have to struggle against all odds. For the purpose of this work, patriarchy is depicted as an absolute system that makes women's lives unpleasant and miserable. Moreover, female autonomy stands for the ability of a woman to make her own decisions and live independently.

3.2 Methodology

This research relies on several information gathering tools. First, close reading is used to examine the novel carefully and identify important themes related to women's condition. Secondly, textual analysis helps to interpret characters, symbols, dialogues, and narrative techniques used by Charlotte Brontë. Finally, library research makes it possible to collect secondary materials such as books, academic articles, and literary criticism related to feminism, Victorian society, and gender studies. These different tools contribute to a deeper understanding of the novel and support the interpretation of the data.

The method used in this research is a qualitative one. It consists in interpreting the content of the novel in relation to the research questions. The analysis focuses on themes, characters, and narrative elements. Particular attention is given to the experiences of female characters and the way they respond to social constraints.

IV. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Representation of Women in Jane Eyre

The representation of women in *Jane Eyre* reveals both the restrictions imposed by Victorian society and the ways in which women attempt to negotiate their place within it. Rather than presenting a single model of femininity, Charlotte Brontë offers a variety of female figures whose experiences reflect different aspects of women's condition.

4.1.1 Jane Eyre's Quest for Independence

Jane Eyre is portrayed as a woman who constantly seeks independence in a context where female autonomy is limited. From her childhood, she refuses injustice, especially in her confrontation with Mrs. Reed. This early resistance already shows her strong sense of dignity.

As she grows older, her independence becomes more thoughtful and principled. Gilbert and Gubar suggest that female characters in *Jane Eyre* embody a tension between repression and self-expression (Gilbert and Gubar, p. 336). This idea is clearly reflected in Jane's decision to leave Thornfield after discovering Rochester's secret. Even though she loves him, she refuses to sacrifice her moral values.

In addition, Rich interprets Jane as a woman in search of identity in the absence of emotional security (Rich, p. 89). This perspective helps to explain why Jane insists on defining herself on her own terms. She does not reject love, but she refuses to lose herself in it. The following excerpt gives more details:

I had my own reasons for being dismayed at this apparition; too well I remembered the perfidious hints given Mrs. Reed about my disposition; the promise pledged girl by Mr. Brocklehurst to apprise Miss Temple and the teachers of my vicious nature. All along I had been dreading the fulfilment of this promise, -I had been looking out daily for the "coming man" whose information respecting my past life and conversation was to brand me as a bad child for ever: now there he was. (Brontë, p. 92)

Jane's independence is therefore not absolute, but it is significant. She represents a woman who is aware of her worth and determined to protect it.

4.1.2 Female Oppression in Victorian Society

Despite Jane's strength, *Jane Eyre* clearly exposes the oppressive conditions faced by women in Victorian England. Women are expected to conform to strict social norms and are often denied both freedom and authority.

The novel's first extended scene of punishment, Jane's confinement in the red-room at Gateshead, establishes this pattern of enclosure before she ever leaves her aunt's house. Locked away as a child for defending herself against her cousin John Reed, Jane experiences the room not simply as punishment but as an early lesson in the limits placed on a dependent, powerless girl within her own family. Her own reaction captures this imbalance precisely: "Unjust! unjust!" she protests inwardly, recognizing even as a child that she has been condemned as "a discord in Gateshead Hall," powerless to alter a judgment she knows to be unfair (Brontë, p. 2). Gilbert and Gubar treat the red-room as the first in a series of enclosures that structure the entire novel, anticipating Bertha's later confinement at Thornfield (Gilbert and Gubar, p. 336). Read this way, Jane's earliest experience of oppression is not merely personal cruelty on the Reed family's part, but a foretaste of the broader constraints placed on female autonomy throughout the novel.

Showalter points out that nineteenth-century society imposed rigid expectations on women's behaviour (Showalter, pp. 13-15). Bertha Mason, having been confined and silenced, is a palpable example. Her situation showcases an extreme form of oppression. Jane's experience at Lowood School also reflects institutional control over women. The strict discipline imposed by Mr. Brocklehurst shows how authority is used to shape female behaviour. As Poovey argues, Victorian society often relied on moral and religious systems to regulate women's lives (Poovey, p. 126).

4.1.3 Education and Female Empowerment

Education plays an essential role in Jane's personal development and contributes greatly to her search for independence. In Victorian society, women generally had limited access to education, and many of them were expected to focus mainly on domestic responsibilities. However, in *Jane Eyre*, education appears as a means through which women can improve their condition and gain a certain degree of autonomy. Although Lowood School is presented as a strict and sometimes oppressive institution, it nevertheless provides Jane with intellectual discipline, moral instruction, and practical skills that help shape her identity.

Moglen argues that education in *Jane Eyre* contributes to the formation of a self-aware and reflective personality (Moglen, p. 152). This idea is evident in Jane's capacity to analyse her experiences and make independent decisions throughout the novel. Her education allows her to become a governess, which provides her with financial support and prevents complete dependence on others. Unlike many women of her time, Jane is able to earn her own living and maintain a sense of dignity.

Furthermore, education strengthens Jane's confidence and her ability to express herself freely. Armstrong explains that nineteenth-century domestic fiction often emphasized women's moral and intellectual capacities (Armstrong, p. 196). This perspective can be applied to Jane, whose intelligence and critical thinking distinguish her from other female characters. Her conversations with Rochester, for example, show that she values intellectual equality in relationships.

4.2 Social Constraints and Gender Roles

Victorian society is organized around strict social and moral expectations that define how men and women should behave. These expectations create limitations for women and influence their personal relationships, opportunities, and social positions. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë demonstrates how gender roles shape women's lives and restrict their freedom. Women are expected to be obedient, modest, and dependent on male authority. Any attempt to challenge these norms is often criticized or discouraged by society.

Showalter explains that nineteenth-century women were frequently confined to domestic roles and denied equal opportunities in education, employment, and public life (Showalter, p. 100). This reality is reflected in Jane's experiences throughout the novel. As a child, she is constantly reminded of her inferior position within the Reed family. Later, as a governess at Thornfield, she occupies an uncertain social position because she is neither a servant nor a member of the upper class.

Moreover, women's social value is often linked to marriage and morality. Victorian society expects women to marry in order to secure financial protection and social respectability. However, Brontë questions these expectations through Jane's refusal to sacrifice her principles for comfort or social acceptance. Jane rejects relationships that threaten her dignity, even when they could provide economic security. Gender roles also affect women psychologically. Female characters such as Bertha Mason and Miss Temple illustrate different responses to social pressure. Bertha represents rebellion against oppression, while Miss Temple symbolizes moral discipline and respectability. Through these contrasting figures, the novel shows the complexity of women's experiences in Victorian society. In this way, *Jane Eyre* criticizes the rigid gender roles imposed on women and reveals how these expectations limit female freedom, identity, and personal fulfilment.

4.2.1 Marriage and Dependence

In Victorian society, marriage was often considered the main objective for women because it provided financial security and social stability. Women generally depended on men economically, which made marriage an important social institution. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë examines the relationship between marriage and female dependence while also questioning traditional expectations associated with it.

Davidoff and Hall explain that middle-class women were largely confined to the domestic sphere, where their identities were closely connected to their husbands (Davidoff and Hall, p. 180). This situation reduced women's autonomy and reinforced male authority within the family. In the novel, several female characters illustrate this dependence. Bertha Mason, for example, is completely controlled by Rochester and deprived of freedom. Her condition reflects the extreme vulnerability of women within patriarchal marriage structures.

However, Jane refuses to accept marriage at the expense of her dignity and moral values. When she discovers that Rochester is already married, she decides to leave Thornfield despite her strong love for him. This decision demonstrates her moral independence and her refusal to become socially and emotionally dependent. Jane also rejects St. John Rivers' proposal because she understands that a marriage without love would destroy her emotional identity.

Eagleton argues that economic conditions strongly influence relationships in the novel (Eagleton, p. 15). Jane's inheritance changes her social position and allows her to return to Rochester as an equal rather than as a dependent governess. Financial independence therefore becomes an important factor in achieving equality within marriage. Through Jane's experiences, Brontë redefines marriage as a relationship that should be based on mutual respect, emotional connection, and equality rather than financial necessity or social obligation. The novel therefore criticizes traditional forms of female dependence while suggesting the possibility of more balanced relationships between men and women.

4.2.2 Class and Gender Inequality

4.2.2.1 The Position of the Governess

The interaction between class and gender is central to Jane's experience. As a governess, she occupies an intermediate position that isolates her socially. Jane's role as a governess places her between two worlds. She is educated but does not belong to the upper class. This creates a sense of distance between her and the people she works for. Armstrong's critical study highlights how such positions reveal tensions within society (Armstrong, p. 196). Jane is present in social spaces but not fully accepted, which reflects the rigidity of class structures.

4.2.2.2 Social Marginalization and Identity

Jane's position as a governess places her in a socially marginalized situation that deeply affects her identity. Although she is educated and intellectually capable, she does not belong to the wealthy upper class. At the same time, she is separated from servants because of her education and professional role. This intermediate social position creates isolation and uncertainty in her relationships with others.

Throughout the novel, Jane is constantly reminded of her inferior social status. Mrs. Reed treats her as an outsider within the family, and even at Thornfield, Jane remains conscious of the social distance between herself and Rochester. These experiences contribute to her strong desire for dignity and self-respect. Rather than accepting humiliation, Jane insists on recognizing her own worth despite her limited social position.

Poovey explains that Victorian society maintained social order by controlling women's behaviour and reinforcing class distinctions (Poovey, p. 126). This perspective helps to understand why Jane often feels excluded from spaces dominated by wealth and privilege. Nevertheless, she refuses to define herself entirely through social hierarchy. Jane's struggle for identity is therefore closely linked to her marginalization. Instead of allowing society to determine her value, she gradually constructs her own sense of self through education, moral integrity, and personal reflection. Her resistance to inferiority demonstrates her inner strength and independence.

In this respect, *Jane Eyre* presents identity as a complex process shaped by both gender and class inequalities. Jane's experience reveals the emotional and psychological consequences of social marginalization while also emphasizing the importance of self-definition and resilience.

4.3 Towards Female Emancipation

4.3.1 Resistance to Patriarchy

Jane's life can be seen as a form of resistance to male authority. She encounters several figures who attempt to control her choices and define her role in society. However, she consistently defends her right to think and act independently. Rich (p. 89) interprets this resistance as a search for self-definition and personal autonomy, evident in her repeated refusal to compromise her principles even when doing so costs her emotional security or social comfort.

St. John Rivers represents a markedly different register of male authority than Rochester, one grounded in religious duty rather than romantic passion, and Jane's refusal of his marriage proposal shows that her resistance is not confined to romantic entanglements alone. St. John frames marriage as a missionary partnership and presents Jane's refusal as a betrayal of God's purpose for her, applying a moral pressure that Jane finds, in some ways, harder to resist than Rochester's more overtly emotional appeals. Jane names the danger directly: "If I were to marry you, you would kill me. You are killing me now," she tells him, recognizing that a marriage entered without love would erase her as completely as any other form of submission (Brontë, p. 35). Her refusal of St. John is therefore as significant an assertion of self-definition as her earlier departure from Thornfield. Taken together, these two refusals suggest that Jane's resistance to patriarchy is directed not at any single man but at the underlying expectation, whether romantic or religious in form, that a woman's identity should be absorbed into a man's purpose. Her resistance shows that women can challenge patriarchal power through self-respect, determination, and the courage to make independent decisions.

4.3.2 Assertion of Identity and Equality

Jane's journey is also marked by a strong assertion of identity and a desire for equality. Throughout the novel, she refuses to accept the idea that social class or gender determines a person's value. She repeatedly affirms that she possesses the same feelings, intelligence, and dignity as men. This is particularly evident in her relationship with Rochester, where she insists on being treated as an equal rather than as a subordinate, declaring outright:

"Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! I have as much soul as you, and full as much heart!" (Brontë, p. 23)

As the story progresses, she becomes steadily more confident in expressing her opinions and defending her beliefs, an extension of the same movement from repression toward self-expression already traced above (Gilbert and Gubar, p. 336). Her financial independence further strengthens her position and allows her to make choices freely. When she finally reunites with Rochester, their relationship is based on greater balance and mutual respect. Through Jane's personal growth, Brontë suggests that women can achieve self-realization and claim equality despite the restrictions imposed by Victorian society.

4.4 Limits and Ambiguities of Female Emancipation

4.4.1 Compromise in Marriage

While the novel suggests progress, it also reveals certain limits. Some critics argue that Jane's final marriage represents a compromise rather than complete emancipation. Although Jane achieves financial independence before marrying Rochester, her story still concludes within the traditional institution of marriage. From a feminist perspective, this ending may suggest that a woman's fulfilment remains linked to a relationship with a man. At the same time, the marriage differs from conventional Victorian expectations because Jane enters it as an independent individual. Rochester's physical condition after the fire also changes the balance of power between them. Therefore, the ending can be interpreted both as a victory for female autonomy and as a partial acceptance of traditional social values (Gilbert and Gubar, p. 336; Eagleton, p. 15).

4.4.2 Persistence of Social Constraints

Persistence and social constraints go hand in hand. Most of the time, social constraints compel individuals to be persistent. Though everyone wants a better life for themselves, it is worth mentioning that some people face miserable situations. Even Jane has been constrained to live in Lowood for several reasons. The following excerpt from the novel under study emphasizes how complicated and risky that environment was. But thanks to Jane's persistence, she has spent eight years there:

"And you came from!"

"From Lowood school in Shire/"

"Ah! A charitable concern. How long were you there!"

"Eight years"

"Eight years! You must be tenacious of life. I thought half the time in such a place would have done up any constitution! No wonder you have rather the look at another world." (Brontë, p. 186)

Despite Jane's achievements, the social structures that limit women's freedom remain largely unchanged. Victorian society continues to impose expectations regarding female behaviour, marriage, and social status. Jane succeeds mainly because of her exceptional determination, education, and inheritance rather than because society becomes more equal. Other female characters, such as Bertha Mason, do not experience the same opportunities for liberation. Their situations illustrate the persistence of oppression and exclusion within the social system. Furthermore, women are still expected to conform to moral standards that are often stricter than those applied to men. The novel therefore presents emancipation as a difficult and incomplete process. While Jane manages to improve her personal situation, the broader systemic social inequalities affecting women continue to exist. This suggests that female emancipation in *Jane Eyre* is significant but remains limited to the realities of Victorian society (Poovey, p. 126).

V. CONCLUSION

This research work examines the women's condition in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* through a critical analysis of some major themes and characters. It explores how the novel reflects the realities of women's lives in Victorian society and the possibilities for their emancipation. The analysis reveals that women in the novel face multiple limitations such as social expectations, economic dependence, and restricted access to power. Through characters like Jane Eyre and Bertha Mason, the text explores the spectrum of the female experience, ranging from submission to resistance.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of education as a tool for empowerment. Jane's intellectual development allows her to gain a certain level of independence, which distinguishes her from many other female characters. The research also demonstrates that gender inequality in the novel is closely linked to class structure. Marriage, often presented as a necessity for women, functions as a form of dependence rather than a bond based on mutual respect.

Although the novel reflects the limitations of its time, it also portrays a heroine who resists oppression and affirms her identity. Jane's journey suggests that emancipation is not achieved through rebellion alone, but through self-awareness, moral strength, and the ability to make independent decisions. *Jane Eyre* remains a significant literary work for understanding the condition of women in the nineteenth century. Not only does it expose the challenges faced by women, but it also proposes a model of resilience and self-determination worth exploring.

The enduring relevance of the novel lies in its nuanced portrayal of a woman's struggle for autonomy and dignity in a society that systematically denied both. Jane's story continues to resonate with contemporary readers because it speaks to ongoing questions about gender equality, personal integrity, and the possibility of love without subordination. As a work of literature, *Jane Eyre* not only critiques the historical condition of women but also advocates for female emancipation through education, self-determination, and personal integrity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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