

A Thematic Study on Preeti Shenoy's *The Homecoming*

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 13

Special Issue: 3

Month: April

Year: 2026

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Citation:

Abinaya Shri, N., and V. Chandrika. "A Thematic Study on Preeti Shenoy's *The Homecoming*." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 13, no. S3, 2026, pp. 5–6.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v13iS3-Apr.10834>

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Abstract

Preeti Shenoy's novel The Homecoming is an emotional and profound study of human emotions, relationships and the complex impact of love and forgiveness on our lives. At one level, the novel is about coming back home, but also about coming back to emotional truth, reconciliation, and the finding of true love. The work is the emotional and heartbreaking novel written by Preeti Shenoy that turns around themes of family, self- discovery, love and the discovery of one's roots. The story turns around Shanaya, a young woman, who returns to her hometown in Kerala after years of living away. She returns to find solace and comfort in her life after going through a series of personal and professional problems. When she discovered her relationship with her family and friends, it changed the landscape of a past she is also forced to contain her emotions and relationships. In her journey, The Homecoming also beautifully depicts the emotional complexity of returning home. The comfort of belonging is also the pain of confronting what has been left behind. This is an emotional novel that uses beautifully imaginary storytelling to show the impact of time, distance, and choice on our relationships. The story is an emotional one about self- discoveries, forgiveness, and the power of love and family.

Keywords: Happiness, Fulfilment, Relationships, Societal Expectations, Success.

The novel portrays love in different forms, such as romantic, familial, and self- love. Shenoy refers to love as an emotion that brings not only happiness but also suffering. The main character, Vipasha, who is often spoken of as Vee, is a living example of this. She was once in love and made many decisions that brought her heartbreak and separation. She proves that love is never simple or without consequences. Through her experiences, her love shows that love is dynamic and changes over time with an individual's development, maturation, and facing the heart reality of life. Following this, the character Vipasha's love for Ankush, her former lover, was an epitome of love at a young age. However, they had to separate due to circumstances and misunderstandings. It was not until they met after a long time that they realised they still had love for each other, though this love was now seasoned with regret and experience.

Shenoy demonstrates how love can transform and become more profound when it is free of ego and resentment. The transformation of love does demonstrate her view of love, which does not die but changes, survives, and forgives. Apart from the love between Ankush

and Vipasha, their families are portrayed in the novel. The protagonist's love for her child, Aryan, is represented as unconditional and selfless, showing love that demands no return. Shenoy thus emphasises love between families through this mother-son relationship, showing love that seeks no return and is thus selfless. It is true this love for her child that Shana demonstrates love, showing it to be an act of giving and nurturing, as highlighted in her work.

It is through this love for her child that Bipasha finds redemption for her past mistakes and finds meaning in her life. That redemptive and transformative power of affection that rebuilds lives and restores hope. Along with the theme of love, Shenoy's novel also discusses the theme of forgiveness. In fact, the title *The Homecoming* itself symbolizes the idea of forgiveness and the return to a place of emotional peace and acceptance. Forgiveness starts with Vipasha's own self. She harbours guilt and remorse for her previous life choices and mistakes, such as leaving Ankush and raising her son alone as a single mother. This emotional baggage causes her to maintain a level of emotional detachment and fear of loving anyone. Shenoy's novel thus shows the importance of forgiving oneself, for one can truly forgive others and allow oneself to fall in love again.

Open-mindedness between Vipasha and Ankush is the emotional climax of the novel. Both characters are hurt by the situation and the decision of the other person. Their reunion forces them to confront the emotional baggage they are still carrying around. Through the conversations between the two protagonists, Shenoy shows the process of forgiveness and how it is a gradual process of understanding and acknowledging the mistake of the past, the affection and the vulnerability of the present situation.

Tolerance between the two protagonists is thus not shown as a simple process of forgiving and moving on but as a gradual process of understanding and acknowledging the mistake of the past and the affection and vulnerability of the present situation. Their forgiveness and reconciliation are thus shown as realistic and mature, and the result of the strength to move on and let go of the resentments of the past.

Through the tolerance and reconciliation of the two protagonists, Shenoy's novel thus shows the important lesson of the interdependence of forgiveness and love: forgiveness is the prerequisite of love and vice versa. Without forgiveness, love cannot exist, and without love, forgiveness cannot exist. Shenoy's novel thus becomes a consideration of the process of forgiveness and emotional wounds of the past and how they can be healed with forgiveness and understanding. The capability of the person to seek forgiveness and love is a strength and source of peace and happiness, rather than a weakness and the foundation of pain and suffering.

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