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An Analysis Of Cross-Cultural Conflict In “A Pair Of Jeans” By Qaisra Shahraz



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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out how cultural differences lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. The short story “A Pair of Jeans” by Qaisra Shahraz is used as an example to show how people from different cultural backgrounds may see the same situation in completely different ways. This study is qualitative in nature. It examines the characters, events, and dialogues in the story to understand how cultural values and beliefs influence people’s actions and decisions. The study finds that the conflict in the story is caused by differences in cultural expectations. Behaviours and appearances that are normal in one culture may be judged negatively in another. The story clearly shows how these differences can create tension and affect relationships. The analysis is based on only one short story. Therefore, the results may not represent all types of cross-cultural conflicts. The study concludes that learning about and respecting other cultures is important to reduce misunderstandings and conflicts. The story sends a message that open communication and tolerance can help people from different cultures to live and work together peacefully.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Conflict, Cultural Values, Misunderstanding, Traditions, A Pair Of Jeans, Etc.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In our modern world, people from many different cultures meet more often because of travel, migration, and technology. This gives them a chance to share ideas, learn from each other, and work together. However, it can also create problems when their cultural values and beliefs are not the same (Gudykunst, 2004). Cross-cultural conflict happens when people from different cultures do not agree on what is right or acceptable in behaviour, clothing, communication, or social roles. For example, one culture might see casual dress as normal, while another might see it as disrespectful. In the same way, some cultures prefer direct communication, while others think that it is better to be indirect and polite. When these differences are not understood, people may feel hurt, judged, or disrespected, even if the other person did not mean to cause harm. These misunderstandings can lead to tension, arguments, and damaged relationships. That is why it is important to be aware of cultural differences, to respect them, and to communicate clearly and openly. According to Ting-Toomey (2010), by doing this, people can avoid unnecessary conflict and build better understanding and trust between cultures.

In literature, cross-cultural conflict is often shown because it is something that happens in real life. Writers use characters from different cultural backgrounds to show how people’s values, traditions, and beliefs can affect the way they think, act, and react (Hall, 1997). These stories help readers to see that even small things, like the way a person dresses, can have very different meanings in different cultures. For example, a pair of jeans might be seen as normal and casual in one culture, but as too modern or inappropriate in another. When such differences appear in a story, they help readers to understand how culture shapes people’s ideas about what is right or wrong, polite or rude, respectful or disrespectful. This makes readers more aware that their

own way of thinking is not the only way, and that other cultures may see the same action in a completely different way. Through these differences, literature educates us on insights, respect and the need to look at the world through the cultural perspective of another individual (Hall, 1997).

Qaisra Shahraz, a British-Pakistani author, educator, and activist, is the author of such literary works, which revolve around the theme of cultural identity and the rights of women and migration. Having been born in Pakistan and grown up in the United Kingdom, she has a personal experience of living between two worlds and this had a great impact on her writing. She was taking the course of English and Classical Civilisation at the University of Manchester and subsequently received a Master in English and Education. She has also taught in the field of education as well as working in the cross-cultural promotion alongside her career in literature. The main characteristic of the work by Shahraz is that she dwells upon the consequences of the female gender and, in particular, on the traditional and contemporary values. Her works frequently concern the challenges of women who have to fight their way through family values, social conventions, and self-development goals (Rahman, 2015). She often writes about characters that are torn between the South Asians cultural traditions and the more liberal social values of the West. This East-West cultural crossbreeding is the setting of most of her short stories and novels. The reason for the interest of East-West culture and its conflict with the society of Shahraz is the personal experience of the migrant and the experiences that she witnessed with the communities of immigrants. Her fiction frequently emphasizes the misconceptions and conflicts which arise when individuals of various cultural origins have to interact, as well as the instances of compassion and reciprocal education (Ali, 2017). She entertains the readers, and at the same time, she invites to discuss the diversity, tolerance, perceptions, and gender equality through narrative such as *A Pair of Jeans*.

A Pair of Jeans is a very good illustration of how cultural conflict may occur in short stories. It tells the story of Miriam, a young woman who lives in Britain but has Pakistani roots. She is engaged to be married, and everything seems fine until one day her fiancé's mother sees her wearing jeans and a short jacket. For Miriam, this outfit is just normal modern clothing that many young women in Britain wear. She does not see anything wrong with it. However, her fiancé's mother comes from a traditional Pakistani background and believes that such clothing is too revealing and not respectful for a future daughter-in-law. Because of this, she decides that Miriam is not suitable for her son and breaks the engagement. What seems like a small matter of clothing to Miriam becomes a very big issue in her fiancé's family. This shows how different cultural values can turn a simple event into a serious misunderstanding, causing hurt feelings and changing the course of people's lives (Shahraz, 1913).

The story takes place in the setting of immigrant life in Britain, where many people struggle to keep a balance between the traditional values of their homeland and the modern lifestyle of the country where they now live (Modood, 2005). This situation is like walking on a thin rope, where one must carefully manage two different ways of living. For many immigrants, especially those who moved as adults, holding on to traditions feels important because it keeps them connected to their roots. However, for second-generation immigrants who are born or raised in Britain, life is more mixed. They grow up learning the culture of their parents at home but also follow the modern lifestyle they see around them every day. This creates a "cultural balancing act" that can be confusing and stressful. As shown in *A Pair of Jeans*, when traditional

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expectations such as modest dress clash with modern choices, like wearing jeans, it can lead to misunderstandings and even break important relationships. The story highlights how difficult it can be to meet the expectations of both cultures at the same time.

Studying this story is important because it shows how strongly cultural values can shape the way people think, react, and make decisions. A Pair of Jeans reflects the apparently innocent decision of choice of clothing as a cause to an intense disagreement not due to the fact that clothes are toxic, but because different cultures perceive them differently. This teaches us that when people from different backgrounds live together, they may misunderstand each other if they are not aware of each other's cultural values. Such misunderstandings can damage relationships, even when no one intended to cause harm. By looking closely at the conflict in this story, readers can understand why respect and tolerance are necessary in a multicultural society. It also highlights the need for open and honest communication to avoid problems. Learning these lessons can help people to live peacefully with others who have different beliefs, customs, and ways of life (Hofstede, 2001).

Problem Statement

Many people today live in multicultural societies where they meet and interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. While this can be a good thing, it can also cause problems if people do not understand or respect each other's cultural values. When individuals lack knowledge of such differences, they might get words or behaviour wrong. This issue is well depicted in A Pair of Jeans through the issue of two families. The contemporary clothes that Miriam wears are normal to her but the family of her fiancé considers it not appropriate according to their traditional values. This cultural difference induces confusion and emotional pain, which ultimately, culminates in the termination of the interaction. This demonstrates that cultural value differences may be disastrous both in personal and social relations. This story requires investigation to know how cultural values are drawn and how they may at times lead to conflict among individuals of diverse background.

Research Questions

What does A Pair of Jeans depict on cross-cultural conflict?

What are some of the cultural values that bring about the major conflict in the story?

What do people learn about these values that can guide people to prevent such conflicts in a real life?

Research Objectives

To analyse how A Pair of Jeans covers cross-cultural conflict in the form of its characters, events and setting.

To find out what cultural values and beliefs provoke the major conflict in the narrative.

To discuss how the knowledge of these cultural values may assist people in preventing such conflicts in real life.

Significance of the Study

The study has significance in that it demonstrates that a simple short story can assist us in realizing actual issues concerning culture. Using the conflict in A Pair of Jeans

as an example, a close observer would realize that the individuals of various cultures might think, feel and behave differently. It further assists us to realize how confusion can occur when our cultural values are not honored or comprehended. Hearing of such cases can help people to be more accepting and respectful of other people despite their practices or ways of life. It also promotes good communication in order to evade or resolve conflicts in a friendly manner. Not only can this work be useful to ordinary readers but also to teachers, students and individuals dealing with multicultural communities. Moreover, it will be used as an important resource material by the future researchers who would like to undertake the study of cultural conflicts either in literature or real life. In this way, the study contributes to building understanding and harmony in diverse societies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Culture

Culture is the way of life that a group of people share. It includes their beliefs, values, customs, traditions, and everyday behaviours. Culture is like a set of rules or habits that people learn from their family and community, and it helps them to know how to live and behave. Hofstede (2001) describes culture as the “collective programming of the mind,” which means that it is the way people’s thoughts and actions are shaped by the society they grow up in. Culture affects many parts of life, such as the language people speak, the clothes they wear, the food they eat, and the festivals they celebrate. It also influences ideas about what is right or wrong, polite or rude, acceptable or unacceptable. Culture is not the same everywhere; it changes from one group or country to another, and even within the same country, different groups may have their own ways. People usually feel most comfortable in their own culture because it is familiar to them. However, when people from different cultures meet, they may notice many differences in habits, values, and beliefs. These differences can be interesting and enriching, but they can also cause misunderstandings if people do not try to understand each other’s cultural background (Habib et al., 2025).

Culture is very important in shaping a person’s identity because it helps people to understand who they are and where they belong. It gives them a sense of connection to their family, community, and traditions (Hall, 1997). From a young age, children learn the rules of their culture by watching and listening to the people around them. They learn what is considered good or bad behaviour, how to dress properly, how to speak politely, and how to treat others. These lessons become part of their thinking and guide their daily actions. Every culture has its own rules and ways of living, which can be very different from others. For example, in one culture, it may be polite to make eye contact when talking, while in another, it may be considered rude. These differences are normal, but when people from different cultures meet, they might not understand each other’s habits or values. This can sometimes lead to confusion, misunderstandings, or even conflict. However, if people respect and try to learn about each other’s cultures, these differences can become opportunities to build better relationships and understanding. In this way, culture not only shapes identity but also influences how people connect with others in a diverse world.

Culture not only shapes a person’s individual identity but also plays a big role in how different groups of people interact with each other. It sets the rules for showing respect, making decisions, and solving problems. These rules can be very different from one culture to another. For example, in some cultures, people show respect to

elders by using very polite and formal language, bowing, or following certain customs. In other cultures, it is completely fine to speak to elders in a friendly and informal way, and this is still seen as respectful (Ting-Toomey, 2010). Similarly, decision-making styles can also vary. Some cultures prefer to make decisions together as a group, while others leave the decision to one leader or authority figure. Even the way problems are solved can differ; some cultures prefer open discussion, while others choose to handle conflicts quietly and indirectly. These differences are not good or bad but they are simply different ways of living and thinking. However, when people from different cultures meet, not understanding these differences can cause confusion or even conflict. This is why it is important to learn about and respect other people's cultural ways. Doing so can help to build trust, avoid misunderstandings, and create positive and respectful relationships between groups.

Cultural Values and Beliefs

Cultural values and beliefs are the strong ideas and principles that guide how people live and behave in a society. They act like invisible rules that help people to decide what is right or wrong, and what is acceptable or not acceptable in their community. These values are not learned in a single day but they are passed down from one generation to the next through family teachings, schools, religion, and long-standing traditions (Schwartz, 2006). For example, in some cultures, honesty is considered one of the most important values, while in others, showing respect to elders or caring for family members may be the top priority. These values affect even the small details of everyday life, such as how people greet each other. Some cultures greet with a handshake, others with a bow, and some with a hug or kiss on the cheek. They also guide how people celebrate important moments like weddings, birthdays, or national holidays, and even how they make major life decisions, such as choosing a career, getting married, or where to live. Cultural values also influence how people treat strangers, solve problems, and work with others. Since these values are often deeply rooted, people may follow them without even thinking, simply because "this is how things are done" in their culture. However, when people from different cultures meet, their values and beliefs may not always match, which can sometimes cause misunderstanding. Understanding that different cultures have different values can help people to respect each other's ways of life, communicate better, and live more peacefully together. In short, cultural values and beliefs shape how individuals see the world and how they behave within it.

Cultural values strongly shape how people behave, and one clear way this happens is through dress codes, gender roles, and the idea of family honour. In some cultures, people believe that dressing modestly shows respect, good manners, and moral behaviour. This might mean wearing clothes that cover the body or avoiding certain styles. In other cultures, personal freedom and self-expression in clothing are seen as more important, so that people can choose what they wear based on their own taste and comfort (Triandis, 1995). Gender roles are another example of how cultural values guide behaviour. These roles are the expectations a society has for men and women. In many traditional cultures, women may be expected to focus more on family care, household duties, or following specific social rules, while men may be given more responsibility for public life, earning money, or making important decisions. These expectations are intergenerational and may shape the manner in which boys and girls are brought up at a tender age. The idea of family honour is also

a very strong cultural value in some societies. Here, people believe that the behaviour of one person affects the reputation of the whole family. If someone behaves in a way the culture considers wrong, it may be seen as bringing shame to all relatives, not just the individual. Because of this, people may try hard to follow social rules, make “good” choices, and avoid anything that could harm the family’s good name. These principles regarding clothes, female and male roles, and family honour reveal how culture influences the everyday behaviour of the people, their life choices, and their interactions with other people. They also explain why people from different cultures may think and act in very different ways.

Cultural values can be very different between Eastern and Western societies, and these differences often affect how people think, act, and interact with others. In many Eastern cultures, the main focus is on collectivism, which means putting the needs of the group such as family, relatives, or the community before personal wants or goals (Hofstede, 2001). People are taught that maintaining harmony, respecting elders, and fulfilling family duties are more important than individual freedom. Personal choices are often made by thinking about how they will affect the whole family or group. Conversely, individualism is highly regarded in most Western societies and this implies that the freedom of the individual, independence, and self-sufficiency are perceived to be the most significant. It is promoted that people make their own life choices, pursue their dreams and become responsible for their own success even at the expense of family expectations. Due to such differences, a miscommunication may occur when individuals of these two cultures come across each other. For example, in many Western societies, it is normal for someone to choose their own marriage partner based on love and personal choice. However, in many Eastern cultures, marriage decisions may involve the family’s opinion, and choosing without family approval could be seen as disrespectful to traditions. These differences do not mean one set of values is better than the other but they are simply shaped by different histories, beliefs, and ways of living. Understanding these variations can help people to communicate better and respect each other’s perspectives when interacting across different cultures.

Concept of Cross-Cultural Conflict

Cross-cultural conflict happens when people from different cultures face problems, misunderstandings, or disagreements because they see the world in different ways. Every culture has its own values, beliefs, and rules about how people should act. Something that feels completely normal, polite, or respectful in one culture might seem strange, impolite, or even wrong in another (LeBaron, 2003; Gul et al., 2023). For example, in some cultures, speaking directly and honestly is a sign of respect, but in other cultures, it might be seen as rude or too aggressive. These conflicts often come from differences in important cultural values, such as how people dress, how men and women are expected to behave, and what responsibilities family members have toward each other. For instance, in some societies, dressing modestly is seen as proper and respectful, while in others, wearing whatever you like is a sign of personal freedom. Similarly, some cultures believe strongly in following traditional gender roles, while others support equal roles for men and women. Family responsibilities can also differ. In some places, children are expected to follow their parents’ wishes even in adulthood, while in others, making independent choices is encouraged. Cross-cultural conflict does not always happen because people want to upset each other;

often, it is simply because they do not fully understand each other's traditions or ways of thinking. Learning about and respecting different cultural values can help people to avoid these misunderstandings and build better communication between people from different backgrounds

Real-life examples of cross-cultural conflict can often be seen in the lives of immigrants. When people move to a new country, they have to adjust to the rules, habits, and ways of life in the new place, but at the same time, they want to keep their own traditions and culture. This can be very challenging and sometimes creates misunderstandings (Berry, 2005). For example, children who grow up in the new country may quickly adopt the local language, clothing styles, and lifestyle, while their parents may prefer to stick to their traditional ways. This difference can cause disagreements within families, as parents may feel their culture is being lost, while children may feel restricted by old customs. There can also be misunderstandings between immigrants and the local people. Locals may not fully understand the immigrants' traditions, and immigrants may not fully understand the local customs, leading to tension. Intercultural marriages are another example where cross-cultural conflict can happen. When two partners come from different cultural backgrounds, they may not always agree on how to raise children, what religious practices to follow, or which social customs to keep. These differences do not mean the relationship cannot work, but they do require patience, understanding, and respect for each other's cultures.

Communication barriers are one of the main reasons for cross-cultural conflict. When people from different cultures talk to each other, differences in language can make it hard to understand what the other person really means (Gudykunst, 2004). Even if they speak the same language, they may use different words, expressions, or tones that can be misunderstood. Body language can also cause confusion because gestures, facial expressions, or even the way someone stands may mean different things in different cultures. For example, a hand signal that is friendly in one culture might be rude in another. Communication styles also vary. Some cultures speak very directly, while others are more indirect and polite, which can lead to misinterpretation of intentions. Stereotypes can make these problems worse because people may judge others based on fixed and often wrong ideas about their culture instead of trying to understand them as individuals. Another challenge is identity struggle. People in cross-cultural situations may feel caught between two different worlds, unsure of which traditions or values to follow (Ting-Toomey, 2010). All these factors make cross-cultural relationships more complicated. To avoid conflict, people need patience, respect, and a willingness to listen and communicate openly with each other.

Cross-Cultural Conflict in Literature

Literature is often used by authors to show the reality of human relationships, especially the problems that can happen when people from different cultures meet. Through stories, writers can show how cultural values, traditions, and beliefs affect the way people think, speak, and act. These differences can sometimes cause misunderstandings or conflicts between characters. For example, a character from one culture may not understand the customs or manners of another culture, which can lead to hurt feelings or disagreements. By using characters, settings, and events, authors make these situations to feel real and personal for readers. Literature also shows the emotional side of cultural clashes, such as confusion, sadness, anger, or even hope by

helping readers to see how deeply such conflicts can affect people's lives (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007). Instead of just talking about cultural conflict as an idea, stories present it through the lives and struggles of characters. This makes it easier for readers to understand and relate to the experiences, even if they have never faced the same situation themselves. In this way, literature not only entertains but also teaches us empathy by showing that cultural conflicts are not just about differences in customs, but about real people and their feelings.

Many short stories, novels, and plays have shown cross-cultural conflict in powerful and relatable ways. For example, in *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali, the story follows a Bangladeshi woman who moves to London. She also has the burden of trying to compromise traditional expectations of her family against her desire to be independent and have a personal freedom within a Western society (Ali, 2003). This illustrates the tension that occurs within an individual and the family when one relocates to a new culture. *Things Fall Apart* is a story of an African village in which European colonialists come in bringing with them new beliefs and systems. Their move interferes with the conventional Igbo culture that demonstrates how big traditional gatherings can entirely transform the way of life and thinking of a community (Achebe, 1958). On the same note, in the play *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, one can find cultural and generational conflict within an African-American family. The characters fight against other values. There are those who desire to stay attached to traditions and those who seek new possibilities and aspirations in a transforming society (Hansberry, 1959). These texts make readers to realize that cross-cultural conflict may occur both individually and within the community where it is usually a matter of balancing between the traditions of the past and the new ways of life, which is not necessarily an easy task.

These illustrations reveal that cross-cultural conflict in literature is a theme, which has no boundaries in space, culture or a single point in history. It is observable in a very wide selection of plots, including immigrant stories, colonial backgrounds, cross-generational family, and multi-generational family stories. The problem of balancing the cultural heritage and adapting to a new environment are common to the characters in the immigrant stories. During the colonial experiences, the whole community is compelled to contend with the coming of a new culture that can alter or substitute their cultural practices. In intergenerational family dramas, younger and older family members may have very different ideas and values because they have grown up in different cultural situations. All these situations show that cultural clashes happen when values, customs, and beliefs from different backgrounds meet. This makes cross-cultural conflict a strong and emotional theme in literature because it touches on identity, belonging, and change. Such stories also remind us that cultural differences can either create misunderstanding and division or lead to learning, growth, and unity, depending on how people deal with them (Said, 1994). By reading and studying these works, readers can understand the struggles, emotions, and decisions that come with living between cultures by making the idea of cross-cultural conflict more real and meaningful.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, the researcher relies on the Cultural Dimensions Theory by Hofstede to gain a deeper insight into the cross-cultural dilemma in *A Pair of Jeans*. This is a theory that was developed by Geert Hofstede towards the end of the 20th century

which states that individuals based on their cultural values may think, behave and relate in various ways (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede observed various key dimensions that may be employed in the comparisons of cultures. These include individualism vs. Collectivism, which looks at whether people value personal independence or group harmony more; Masculinity vs. Femininity, which examines whether a culture focuses more on competition and achievement or on care and cooperation; Power Distance, which is about how much inequality or hierarchy people accept in society; and Uncertainty Avoidance, which describes how comfortable a culture is with change, risk, or unclear situations. Through these dimensions, we can easily understand why individuals of varying cultures may fail to understand one another. These concepts in *A Pair of Jeans* assist us in examining the disparities between the cultural expectations and more contemporary and individualized values. This theory provides an excellent guideline in studying the influence of the actions and choices of the characters based on their respective cultural backgrounds as it makes the reasons behind the conflict more comprehensible as depicted in the story.

The contrast between individualism and collectivism is the source of the main conflict in *A Pair of Jeans*. The female protagonist reveals more individualistic traits, that is, she appreciates her own decisions, freedom of choice, and being able to express herself in the manner she prefers. Her fiancé family, on the other hand, ascribes to collectivist where family honour and tradition together with the acceptance of society are more vital than individual desires. A decision of a person in collectivist thinking can be made concerning the impact it would have on the entire family or group whereas in individualistic thinking, individuals are concerned with what would make them happy or accomplish their own interests. According to Hofstede (2011), in cultures that practise individualism, independence and the right of an individual are considered highly important whereas in cultures that practise collectivism, harmony of the group and adherence to common practices are more important. This contrast leads to tension in the story, since the woman does not think and act in ways expected by the family of her fiancé. There is also the greater East-West culture separation in this story with the Western societies usually endorsing individual liberty, whereas the Eastern societies usually anticipate the individual to prioritize family or the community requirements. This conflict between the individual wishes is the focal point of the conflict in the story as it demonstrates how cultural values influence the relations of people and their decisions.

The next aspect of the theory of Hofstede that is observable in *A Pair of Jeans* is the Masculinity vs. Femininity dimension. In this theory, masculinity implies that a culture cherishes competition, success, aggressiveness and gender role. Femininity, conversely, implies that a culture is concerned about caring about other people, collaborating, being equal and having a good quality of life (Hofstede et al., 2010). The behavior and thoughts of the family of the fiancé can be viewed as a strong masculine feature in the story. They pay attention to saving the family reputation by regulating female clothing, and keeping within the traditions of men-women conduct. In this culture, the actions of a woman are mostly associated with the honour of the entire family and therefore, her decision will not be viewed as just hers. This is very different from the feminine, more equal values often seen in Western societies, where people are encouraged to make their own choices, gender equality is valued, and men and women have more freedom to define their own roles. In these societies, clothing is usually seen as a personal matter, not a family or community issue. By using

Hofstede's framework, it becomes easier to see that the conflict in the story is not just about one woman wearing jeans but it is a clash of deep cultural values. On one side is a culture that sees rules, honour, and gender roles as central; on the other side is a culture that values freedom, equality, and self-expression. This structured way of looking at the story helps to explain why the characters misunderstand each other. Their disagreement is not only about personal feelings but also about two very different sets of beliefs about how people, especially women, should live and behave.

Gaps in the Existing Literature

Though *A Pair of Jeans* by Qaisra Shahraz has been examined in many other academic settings, much of the research that has been conducted till now has mainly addressed issues pertaining to gender roles, women empowerment and identity dilemmas in multicultural societies (Ahmad, 2018). These works tend to stress the fact that the personal experiences of the main character are used to contrast the traditional Eastern values with the modern Western ones. Though these remarks provide a good insight on the role of gender in the creation of identity, they do not go far in terms of transferring the results to the actual conflict solving or intercultural comprehension in real life. Besides, studies specifically focusing on *A Pair of Jeans* as a cross-cultural conflict case study tend to focus on theoretical explanations instead of filling the gap with practical and daily inferences (Khan, 2020). Discussions about cultural value, family honour and breakdown in communications are normally addressed as symbolic in literature, and not as actual experiences in inter-cultural dealings that the reader may experience. Consequently, the possibility of the text as a learning apparatus towards the enhancement of cultural sensitivity has not been considered. This investigation bridges this gap by integrating the elements of literary critique and cross-cultural conflict theory, in the case of Hofstede Cultural Dimensions model, in order to derive practical implications on how to prevent misconceptions in a multicultural context. In connecting the symbolic and narrative components of *A Pair of Jeans* to the real-world cultural communication concepts, the study offers a mean to connect between theoretical literary analysis and intercultural competence approaches that can be applied. In this way, it does not only enrich the interpretation of the work of Shahraz, but also serves to widen the more general discussions concerning how literature can help people to become empathetic and understanding of one another in a peaceful and respectful manner.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This piece of work relies on a qualitative research design, thus implying that it is concerned with the comprehension of ideas, meanings, and messages as opposed to numerical data and statistics (Sehrish et al., 2025; Gul et al., 2023). The approach adopted is the textual analysis that is a manner of reading and studying the short story closely to identify its hidden themes, symbolism and how the characters relate to each other (Creswell, 2014). This methodology is effective, since the study is concerning the exploration of cultural meanings as demonstrated in the narrative and not the gathering of quantifiable information. The cultural dimensions theory proposed by Hofstede guides the study and assists in identifying and clarifying cultural differences in the story, including the individualism/collectivism or masculinity/femininity difference. Through this approach, the study would be able to establish how the story

displays divergent cultural values and how these cultural values lead to misunderstanding between characters who belong to different backgrounds. This renders the analysis more specific and tied to actual cultural problems.

Nature of the Study

This analysis is an interpretive literary analysis and it implies that this study does not only consider the short story as a work of creative writing, but it also considers it as the work that demonstrates real-life cultural scenarios. It is aiming at getting knowledge on how various cultural values and methods of communication amongst people can create misunderstandings and conflicts. After reading the story carefully, the research attempts to locate instances of how the belief, traditions, and expectations of the characters influence the actions and relationships of the characters. It is aimed at connecting these findings with the real life in order to observe how cultural differences can lead to troubles in the present-day diverse societies. Such a study not only explains what occurs in the story, but also teaches us some lessons in how people, in the varied backgrounds, can be able to know each other better, prevent unnecessary confrontation and live together in a more peaceful manner through respecting and accepting each other cultural values.

Data Collection and Sources

The primary source of data used in this research is a short story written by Qaisra Shahraz which is titled A Pair of Jeans. Originally published in The New Internationalist, in 2013, and subsequently included in the Pakistani school syllabus. The story will be read thoroughly in order to get the message and themes. The analysis will also be supported by other sources that are referred to as secondary data. These are research articles by academicians on the work of Shahraz and her themes. Literary studies on how cultural conflicts are revealed in the literature will also be useful in comprehending the story. Also, books and articles that describe the Cultural Dimensions Theory of Hofstede will serve as a primary guide to analyze the cultural differences in the story. The interviews and speeches of Qaisra Shahraz in which she discusses her intentions in writing and the impact of the culture will also be utilized to learn more about her motives and thoughts.

Theoretical Framework

This study will be founded on the Cultural Dimensions Theory by Hofstede (Hofstede, 2001) that describes how the culture of a certain people influences their values, beliefs and how they act. There are six key cultural dimensions of the theory, yet this study concentrates on three of them which are most relevant in order to understand A Pair of Jeans. The first one is the Individualism vs. Collectivism and it examines whether individuals prioritize their personal desires more or the requirements of their relatives and community. It can be observed in the story through the conflicts of the characters between individual freedom and cultural demands. The second is Masculinity vs. Femininity which is an explanation on how men and women should behave in the society. As an illustration, women in certain cultures are required to dress and behave in a particular manner to guarantee family honour whereas in other cultures women are free to express themselves. The third is Power Distance which displays the way people tolerate or question the inequity of power in the relationships. This influences the decision making process, the people in authority and

conflict resolution. With the help of this theory, the study can attentively examine the cultural miscomprehensions in *A Pair of Jeans* and elaborate how the characters respond in the manner in which they respond. It will also assist in determining the lessons of the story that could be learnt in the real life in order to prevent the clash of cultures and enhance the knowledge of people with various backgrounds. Through this structure, one is in a better position to relate the occurrences in the narrative with the actual cultural practices in the real world.

Data Collection Method

The information regarding this research was gathered by means of documentary analysis. This approach implies reading and studying various written or published sources of information rather than gathering information face to face (Bowen, 2009; Gul et al., 2022). The short story examined was *A Pair of Jeans* by Qaisra Shahraz. The researcher has read the story repeatedly and (marked) the sections that indicated cultural conflict, including disparities in traditions, values, or expectations between the Eastern and the Western cultures. Moreover, the researcher has consulted previous studies and scholarly literature on the story in order to comprehend the ways other scholars have interpreted the story. This assisted in the comparison of the various views and locating gaps or new angles to venture into. The study also looked for important cultural themes in the story by using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory as a resource material. This theory helped in linking the events and character actions in the story to real cultural patterns. No surveys, interviews, or direct contact with people were done, so there were no human participants. Because of this, there was no need for a formal ethical review. This method made it possible to focus deeply on the text and related literature to understand the cultural issues presented in the story.

Data Analysis Method

This study uses thematic analysis to study the cultural conflicts shown in *A Pair of Jeans*. Thematic analysis is a method that helps to find and understand repeated ideas or patterns (called themes) in a text (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first step was familiarization, which means reading the short story many times to fully understand the events, characters, and cultural issues. Next was coding, where the researcher marked or highlighted parts of the text that showed cultural misunderstandings, clashes in values, or problems in communication between characters. After this, the researcher grouped similar codes together to form themes. For instance, cases where characters differed on dress and way or style of life were categorized into themes such as Traditional vs. Modern values or gender expectations. Such themes aided in presenting a clear image of the key cultural problems of the story. Lastly, the researcher employed the interpretation based on theory and this is to relate these themes to the Cultural Dimensions Theory developed by Hofstede. This move served to clarify on the more cultural factors which contributed to the conflicts including individualism/collectivism, gender roles, and power distance. These steps allowed obtaining a clear and ordered perception of the way in which the cultural disagreements emerge in the story and the reasons behind this.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Overview

This chapter describes the primary findings of the study and takes a closer look at how the differences in culture create conflicts in *A Pair of Jeans* by Qaisra Shahraz. The narrative demonstrates the responses of characters of diverse cultural backgrounds to the same situation in different ways due to beliefs, values, and traditions. In order to explain these conflicts, the study employs the Cultural Dimensions Theory formulated by Hofstede, which contributes to explain why people think and behave differently according to their culture. The discussion is centered on three areas. To start with, Individualism vs. Collectivism, which demonstrates the conflict of personal freedom and the requirements of the family or community. Second, Masculinity vs. Femininity, which brings focus to the expectations that men and women hold in the Eastern and Western cultures. Third, Power Distance, the discussion of respect of authority and family order in decision making and relationships. Through these themes, the chapter does not just analyze the story as a literary work, but also relates it with life aspects where individuals belonging to various cultures could have conflicts with one another. This assists readers to get to know how to be tolerant, respectful and open to communication to minimize conflicts and develop cross-cultural relationships that are more effective.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

The conflict between individualism and collectivism is one of the main issue in the story. Miriam, the protagonist, is a character who is convinced in individualism, i.e., she appreciates her personal decisions, independence, and acting in her personal manner of expression. As an example, she puts on jeans and a short jacket, since that is what she likes and in her eyes, it is utterly normal. Her decisions, however, conflict with the collectivist principles of those who surround her, because they hold the philosophy of prioritizing the norms and traditions of the group over individual wishes. The collectivist culture places emphasis in the value of belonging and obeying the collective norms instead of being unique and doing things according to own preferences. Such a difference is a source of tension, since independence of Miriam would appear disrespectful or rebellious to other people who want her to fit in. They may believe that she is self-centred or is not concerned with their cultures and she feels oppressed and misinterpreted. The conflict between being herself and adhering to the demands of others is what renders the story a lot of drama. It depicts how difficult it may be when the lifestyle of one individual fails to conform to the norms of their family or community. It is the conflict, which makes us consider balance. Will Miriam be able to be both herself and at the same time respecting her culture or does she have to decide between the two? She, illustratively, decides to put on jeans and a short jacket, which is natural to her:

“Miriam put on her jeans and jacket, feeling comfortable and confident, thinking it was just ordinary modern clothing.”

Conversely, the family of the fiancé that Miriam is engaged to is collectivistic, i.e. they consider family honor, traditions and the opinion of the community more important than individual decisions. To them, the way one dresses or conducts does not only concern personal preference but also the entire family. When Miriam wears jeans and a short jacket, they see it as disrespectful because it goes against their

cultural expectations. They believe she should dress modestly to protect the family's reputation and follow their customs. For them, fitting in with the group is more important than standing out. They worry that Miriam's independence will make others look down on them, and they expect her to change for the sake of unity. This causes conflict because Miriam feels controlled, while they feel she is being selfish. The difference in values creates tension, as neither side fully understands the other's perspective. They see Miriam's clothing as disrespectful:

“His mother looked at her in shock, and said, ‘This is not acceptable in our family. How can you show such disrespect?’”

The story shows how cultural differences can create big problems in relationships. According to Hofstede (2011), in individualist cultures like Miriam's, people believe in personal freedom, making their own choices and expressing themselves. But in collectivist cultures like her fiancé's family's, group harmony, family respect, and tradition matter more than individual desires. This clash of values is why their engagement falls apart. For Miriam, wearing jeans is just normal. It is her way of being comfortable and independent. But her fiancé's family sees it as disrespectful because, in their culture, clothing is not just about personal style but it reflects family honor. They expect her to dress modestly to fit in and avoid gossip. When she refuses, they think she is selfish, while she feels they are controlling. This misunderstanding grows until it breaks their relationship. The story proves that even small things like what someone wears can cause big conflicts when people have different cultural values. It is not just about clothes but it is about what those clothes represent. Miriam values freedom, while her fiancé's family values tradition. Such differences may go in to destroy relationships without compromise and understanding of how difficult it is when two cultures collide over individual decisions.

Masculinity vs. Femininity

Conflict between the traditional gender roles and the independence in the modern times is also one of the features of the story. The family of the man that Miriam is to marry adheres to strong cultural values that are associated with masculine gender, where a man is supposed to protect the reputation of the family and a woman is supposed to comply with some of the rules such as dressing decently and acting in a proper way. Their decisions, particularly on dress, are representative of the entire family and thus they attempt to dictate what Miriam puts on. According to them, men ought to be in control and women ought to be silent and obey custom. Yet, Miriam who was raised in a more feminine world of equality and self-expression does not allow others to dominate her life. She seeks the freedom to dress and do as she pleases as any man would have wanted. This brings about tension since her defiance to the fiancé family members is considered shame and she feels that their rules are unjust and obsolete. The issue of traditional gender expectations being detrimental to relationships is demonstrated in the conflict where one party is determined to be in charge and the other takes the freedom. The theme of the story is whether such outdated roles are still relevant in a society that requires women to be given the same respect. It demonstrates that in the situations when the society imposes rigid regulations on women, anger, rebellion, and broken relationships are the frequent outcomes. The family of the fiancé in the story reinforces the masculine cultural ideas, as the family prestige the control over the dressing of women and strict gender

division are the mandatory values:

“You must behave according to our family rules. Women should dress modestly and respect the traditions of the house.”

Miriam was brought up in a more contemporary and westernized society where men and women are equal. Here, women are allowed to dress, pursue careers and live the way they wish without a rigid code of dressing and behavior. In the case of Miriam, sporting jeans and a short jacket does not constitute rebels but it is simply a way of expressing oneself. She is a believer in equality, self-sufficiency and the ability to make personal choices, as men do. The family of her fiancé does not view the same way. They adhere to the old-fashioned gender roles, according to which, women are supposed to act humble and pursue family traditions. Miriam appears in their eyes to be disrespectful, even dangerous, in that she threatens their control. This value variance brings about conflict. Miriam is a captive of their rules and they consider her as a rebellious woman. The narrative demonstrates the difficulty of intermingling when two cultures collide and conflict between the gender roles where one of the parties cherishes freedom and the other cherishes tradition. It causes us to wonder whether the expectations that existed long ago should be what restricts the women in choosing in a world that is evolving.

“I just wore what I felt comfortable in. Why should my clothes hurt anyone?”

The clash of two opposed opinions on gender roles, which is made evident in the story, is also characterized by Hofstede theory. In cultures that adhere to masculinity such as that of the fiancé of Miriam, the society believes in strength, control and strict rules particularly on how men and women ought to conduct themselves. Men are supposed to defend the family and women have to obey the customs, such as dressing in a modest way. And yet Miriam belongs to a more feminine culture, where equality, individual liberty and respect among each other hold greater weight. In this case, women do not have to be controlled by outdated rules as they can choose what to do on their own. When there is a collision of these two cultures, there are problems. The independence of Miriam is viewed as a threat to the family of her fiancé. They fear that she will disgrace them with her failure to obey them. Miriam, in her turn, is frustrated, as she does not want to be treated as a child either and be manipulated. The conflict of those values is emphasized in the story as one side sees freedom as a matter of course, and the other one as rebellion. Such differences, without understanding and compromise, may destroy relationships. It causes us to doubt the fact that there are rigid gender roles in the modern world, whereby, there are more individuals who have faith in fairness and the equality of rights to all, irrespective of their cultural differences.

Power Distance

There is also the story of how the disparities in power bring issues between Miriam and the family of her fiancé. Older members of the family, such as the mother and the elders, are the ones who wield most of the power in their culture and the youngsters are supposed to obey whatever they say. This is termed as high power distance wherein order and respect towards the elders is highly valued. The family considers it disrespectful when Miriam makes her own decisions such as wearing jeans as opposed to their regulations. According to them, she ought to take in their decisions

particularly on marital and conduct as it is the way their culture operates. However, Miriam has a low power distance background, in which individuals challenge authority and think that all people, even young women, should have a voice in their lives. She is absolutely clueless as to why she should be a blind follower of older family members. This clash creates tension. The family believes that she is a rebel whereas she feels like she is being choked by them. The narrative also points out how unequal power of relationships can be damaging when one party wants the other to be obedient and the other party wants to be free. We ask ourselves: Does tradition always have a way to the exclusion of individual happiness? Is it possible to have both respect towards elders and the respect towards personal choices in families? The conflict demonstrates the difficulties of the situation when two cultures have so different perspectives on the power and freedom. The mother and older generation are the ones to have authority in the story and their views play a significant role in the interaction:

“My mother cannot accept this. She has the final word, and her decision must be respected.”

The novel illustrates how rigid family structures can result in agonising tensions. High power distance and cultures such as the family of her fiancé dictate and the younger family members are expected to follow whatever they have to do without doubting it whether it is marriage, behavior, or even a choice of clothing. Miriam, who is raised in a more egalitarian society where she takes very simple personal choices such as wearing jeans, violates these unwritten rules without knowing it. This is perceived by the family of her fiancé to be outrageous disobedience and Miriam merely thinks that she is normal. It is a cultural misfit. They feel looked down on, she feels manipulated and no one is a winner. The interaction fails, as their ideologies are too opposite: one party is sure that authority should never be questioned, the other one is sure that people have to be free. The narrative demonstrates how such strict hierarchies of power do not leave any chance to compromise or to understand one another across generations. It causes us to wonder whether the traditions that require us to obey all they say are fair in the present era, at least when they dictate us to make decisions between being ourselves and keeping our family happy. In the end, the cancelled betrothal confirms that love cannot easily overcome the obstacles when there is conflict of power and freedom between cultures.

Cross-Cultural Misunderstandings and Communication

There are also misunderstandings in the story as a result of the communication and interpretation of action differences. Through the story, we get to see how easily individuals in other cultures are prone to misinterpret each other even in the most basic of actions. To Miriam, jeans are only casual attire. It is no more than comfort and personal style. However, to the family of her fiancé, the same jeans represents a disrespect of their values and the rebellion. This transpires due to the fact that in their culture, dressing has a deeper meaning in terms of modesty, family honor, and adherence to traditions. Each side is not necessarily wrong. These are simply the same action that is being perceived through entirely different cultural perspectives. The issue is aggravated by the fact that they fail to openly discuss these differences with each other. Miriam does not even notice that her clothes are offensive, whereas the family only believes that she wants to fight it. Such communication gap transforms a

minor specific problem into a major dispute that harms their relationship. The story teaches us that in cross-cultural relationships, people need to explain their perspectives patiently and listen without judgment. Without this understanding, innocent actions can be misinterpreted, feelings get hurt, and relationships fall apart over what started as simple misunderstandings. It shows why we must always try to see things from others' cultural viewpoints before jumping to conclusions. Miriam sees wearing jeans as normal, but the fiancé's family interprets it as a breach of respect:

“She did not understand why her clothes could be seen as dishonourable, thinking it was a simple modern outfit.”

This reflects communication barriers, stereotypes, and identity struggles discussed in cross-cultural studies (Ting-Toomey, 2010). The story perfectly illustrates how cultural differences can create unnecessary conflicts when people do not communicate properly. With reference to the findings of Ting-Toomey, we simply interpret the behavior of others based on our cultural background such as the ability to view the same picture but explain it in different ways. Miriam puts on jeans because she believes it is not a big deal but the family of her fiancé believes it is appalling misconduct. They both make no attempts to justify their own attitude and see the perspective of the other. The family believes that Miriam is wilfully being disrespectful due to stereotypes that western women are rebellious. Miriam believes that they are not being reasonable without regard to their cultural beliefs about modesty and respect. These non-verbal assumptions and the absence of open-minded discussion transform a mere clothing decision into the reasons of the end of the relationship. The cultural identity reveals its influence on actions as seen in the story. Miriam desires to make her own statement, and the family would like to keep their cultures. Small misunderstandings can become big unless there are sincere talks in which both parties can listen and attempt to understand one another. It teaches us that, in situations of multiculturalism, we have to ask ourselves, Why does this bother you? Not simply by being angry. The only possible way to get to the real picture of understanding is to be patient and ask questions and be willing to look beyond our own cultural prism or we will continue to hurt one another over trivial things which can be sorted out through better communication.

Linking Findings to Literature

This study agrees with what experts like Hall and Hofstede have found that people from different cultures often clash because they see the world differently. In the story, Miriam and her fiancé's family argue over simple things like clothing, gender roles, and who gets to make decisions. These conflicts happen because Miriam values personal freedom (individualism), while her fiancé's family cares more about group harmony and tradition (collectivism). Earlier research talked about big cultural differences in general, but this story shows exactly how those differences play out in real life. For example, when Miriam wears jeans, it is not just about fashion but it is a clash between her desire for self-expression and her fiancé's family's strict rules. The story proves that small and everyday actions can cause big misunderstandings when people do not share the same values.

The story also highlights how gender roles and power dynamics create conflict. The family of Miriam's fiancé is designed according to the conventional masculine norms,

according to which men have the right and women are expected to comply with some rules. Yet, Miriam belongs to a culture that recognizes equality, in which women are allowed to choose on their own. This contrast leads to conflict in that the family wants Miriam to abide by their rules yet she wants to be treated like an equal. This is referred to by Hofstede research as masculinity vs. femininity in cultures. There are societies where control and rigid positioning have become important and others where equity and adaptability are important. The narrative reveals how such conflicting expectations may be damaging to the relationships, particularly when one party is made to feel dominated and the other offended. It teaches us that we should be respectful to other points of view on gender and power rather than stamping our foot on one type of thinking in a pluralistic world.

Above all, the story is an illustration about how to live in a multicultural society. It demonstrates that the possible ways of avoiding conflicts are respect, communication, and tolerance. Had the family of Miriam and her fiancé communicated freely about their differences, as opposed to presuming that it was really bad, there could have been a compromise that was reached. As an example, Miriam might have given reasons as to why wearing jeans is important to her, and the family may have given reasons as to why tradition is important to them. Lack of such an understanding meant that small things became huge and their relationship failed. The narrative teaches us to hear each other and be ready to change in the world where many cultures live. Rather than condemn others because they are different, we must attempt to learn. After all, cultural diversity does enrich the life of people only when we can treat it with patience and openness of mind.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Findings

Individualism vs. Collectivism

Miriam wants to live her life with freedom and express her own choices, like wearing jeans and being herself. This shows her individualist values, where personal happiness and independence are most important. Conversely, the family of her fiancé is collectivist in nature as traditions, family honour, and the societal opinion are placed in the first position. In their case, they do not see Miriam in a Christian way since the clothing is not only a personal decision but also a way to influence the respect of the family in the society. This contrast brings a conflict between the free and the cultural expectations.

Masculinity vs. Femininity

The response of the family indicates the way that even traditional gender-based roles dictate the lives of women. To them, a woman has to dress in a decent and conservative manner, since her actions and looks symbolize the dignity of the entire family. When a woman fails to act according to these expectations, then people consider that she is disrespecting her culture. Wearing jeans in the case of Miriam was considered an infringement on the respect of the family. This demonstrates the fact that women are the ones who usually bear the responsibility to uphold traditions and reputation of the community.

Power Distance

The parents of the fiancé are symbolic of the older generation and they give the final word on matters of the family which matter. The fact that they decided to break the engagement demonstrates the power held by the elders and the necessity of the younger generation to follow their decisions in most of the cases. This portrays the aspect of cultural hierarchy in which age and seniority provide individuals with greater influence. The individual desires of Miriam are disregarded, since the views of the parents on tradition and family honour are taken into consideration. This demonstrates the fact that family decisions are highly influenced by cultural hierarchy.

Symbol of Clothing

Jeans in the narrative are more than mere garments but they are full of connotations. In the case of Miriam, the donning of jeans is a mere comfort and liberation by revealing her modern and autonomous physique. But to the family of her fiancé the same jeans have meant disrespect, immodesty and a challenge to their cultural practices. This demonstrates that even a single thing may have a radically different meaning in a different culture. By causing miscommunication and conflict, the jeans become a strong representation of the discrepancy between one individual and the cultural norms.

Cultural Misunderstandings

In the story, it is evident that even simple things such as dressing in a certain way may result in serious issues when people of different cultures perceive things in a different way. It is normal and harmless to one individual, which may look offensive or disrespectful to another. This is due to the fact that every culture possesses values and rules. When such differences are not learned or observed, minor differences can develop into major conflicts. The narrative teaches that one should be sensitive and respectful for other cultural views (Khan et al.,2025).

Conclusion

The study examined the theme of cross-cultural conflict in *A Pair of Jeans* by Qaisra Shahraz and described it using the Cultural Dimensions Theory of Hofstede. This was done to observe the way various cultural values cause misunderstanding among individuals. It was analyzed that Miriam, the protagonist, symbolizes individualist values. She is a woman who feels in the personal choice, independence, and freedom. To her, putting on jeans is a harmless and ordinary thing. Conversely, the family that her fiancé belongs to reflects the collectivist ideals. To them traditions, family honour and the view of the community matter a lot. In their opinion, all people should obey these regulations to ensure that the family image is not spoiled. In that manner, the little gesture of wearing jeans turns out to be a huge problem, since it has got various meanings in various cultural settings. Another outcome of the story is that cultural conflicts go beyond clothes to include the richer aspects of cultural values such as gender norms and status quo. Women are expected to dress traditionally and live in a modest way by the family of their fiancé whereas the older generation possesses the power over the younger one. This disparity of thought causes the engagement to be broken. The study concludes that the problem of cross-cultural conflicts is usually observed when individuals do not comprehend or appreciate the values of others. The lesson that the story provides us is that peaceful relationships require tolerance,

respect and communication. It helps us to understand that even the simplest activities might have effective cultural implications and that overlooking such differences may lead to severe confrontations. The important message of this story is to understand and respect other cultures.

It was also observed in the study that gender expectations and authority contribute to the fact that the conflict in *A Pair of Jeans* is even more serious. Women in the story are supposed to dress and act to preserve family honour. The dressing that is a normal aspect of Miriam is evaluated in the most extreme way due to these expectations. Simultaneously, the power of elder generation, particularly the fiancé parents, is quite powerful. Their judgment is more important than their own decisions, which demonstrates the issue of cultural hierarchy in relationships. This is an experience of many individuals who cannot live in either of the two worlds, and particularly, immigrants. They are usually under pressure to choose between individual liberty and societal practices. The message of the story is that cultural differences do not necessarily revolve around big events; in some cases, even minor things are not only in what one wears, how one behaves or even simple choices, can cause huge problems. What seems to be normal in one culture may not be acceptable in some other culture. The broken engagement in the story is not merely on the jeans of Miriam but it runs deeper to the issues of culture, identity and values. By summarizing the study, one can conclude that *A Pair of Jeans* is not only a narrative of a dead-end relationship. It sends a powerful message regarding the need to be tolerant, respectful, and dialogue between cultures. The narrative teaches us that there is the need to learn about cultural differences so that we can live in peace. It demonstrates that human relationships can be strengthened and more harmonious by respecting each other and communicating to avoid the conflict situation across cultures.

Recommendations for Future Research

The research on *A Pair of Jeans* and such like stories in the future should examine them as cultural and social mirrors of real life as well as works of fiction. Stories like this show us how people experience identity, family, and cultural conflict in their everyday lives. Using theories such as Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions is very useful because it helps students and researchers to connect the events in the story to real-life cultural clashes, like the struggle between personal freedom and group traditions. Teachers can also use such stories in classrooms to help students to understand the importance of respecting other cultures. Through literature, students can learn about tolerance, acceptance, and how small actions may have different meanings in different societies. This makes literature a very effective tool for teaching intercultural understanding. For future studies, researchers can look at other works written by Qaisra Shahraz, since many of her stories focus on themes of culture, identity, and migration. Similar diaspora writers who live between two worlds can also be studied to see how they represent the conflicts and challenges of multicultural life. In addition, doing comparative studies across different writers and cultures can make the findings stronger and richer. For example, comparing Asian, African, or Middle Eastern diaspora stories can show both similarities and differences in how cultural identity is handled. Such research will not only help in literature studies but also support intercultural learning by showing how literature reflects and explains real human experiences in multicultural societies.

Final Thoughts

This study found that *A Pair of Jeans* is not simply about a broken engagement but a story that carries a deeper message about life, relationships, and culture. It shows how culture strongly shapes the way people think, behave, and make decisions. Miriam's wish to choose her own lifestyle and her fiancé's family's focus on tradition highlight the clash between different cultural values. By using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, this study was able to explain how individualism, collectivism, gender roles, and power distance create misunderstandings between people. The story becomes more than a piece of fiction. It turns into a lesson about real-life intercultural communication and the problems that can happen when cultures do not understand each other. In today's world, where people from many different cultural backgrounds live, work, and study together, the story teaches an important lesson: tolerance, respect, and understanding are necessary for peace and harmony. *A Pair of Jeans*, therefore, reminds readers that even small actions can carry big cultural meanings, and only respect can bridge these differences.

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