

Abstract

Introduction

The relationship between victim – victimizer is an age-old issue. It begins with the birth of human beings. Relations in human society are determined by the power structure of the society. In the struggle for existence, the one who is powerful survives. The one who is weak and powerless has to yield to others and to circumstances. This view is aptly summarized in ‘Might is Right’. Those who are powerful, victimize the powerless or the weak. The poor and the weak are the natural targets of the mighty; hence, they become easy victims. The people with power control the society and institutions in the society and in this way, they rule the people in the society.

In Thomas Hardy’s novels, the victim – victimizer relationship is one of the major concerns. Many of his characters belong to the lower class and that is why they face several problems. Some of his characters are weak and helpless while some of them are strong. Destiny, chance, coincidence, nature, social circumstances, and the actions of the characters play a dominant role in bringing about the downfall of the characters who turn in to victims.

The research deals with the relationship between the victim and victimizer in the Victorian novels in general and specifically in Thomas Hardy’s selected novels *The Mayor of the Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The researcher aims to highlight the various factors or reasons responsible for victimization in Hardy's novels.

Thomas Hardy is an eminent writer who is renowned for his tragic novels. Most of his novels deal with the role of fate. He also effectively makes use of nature, chance, and coincidence. These elements shape the destiny of his characters which forces them to suffer in the process of victimization.

Chapter I ‘Introduction’ provides the background of the present research. It gives a brief description of the concept of victimization. The problem, hypothesis, and the objectives of the study are also presented. This is followed by the research methodology, scope and limitations, and significance of the study and the scheme of chapterisation. Furthermore, this chapter provides a brief critical summary of Thomas Hardy’s selected novels.

Chapter II deals with the theoretical background of the study. The survey of the Victorian literature provides a clear picture of the nature of victimization. This chapter also explores victimization in the Victorian era. It further explores the aspects of victim- victimizer relationship. This chapter also deals with the victim – victimizer relationship by various Victorian novelists such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot. Finally, this chapter provides adequate information about Thomas Hardy’s perception of victimization.

Chapter III deals with society as a victimizer in Thomas Hardy’s selected novels. Society inflicts suffering on individuals through its outworn conventions and superficial values. Society makes its people suffer because of its insistence on some desirable social standards.

For example, Michael Henchard asks his stepdaughter not to behave beneath her actual social class, even though he and his family were at one time a part of the lower class. Society has rigid conventions which make people either victims or victimizers and the negative role of society ruins the life of the characters.

Chapter IV deals with characters as victimizers in the selected works of Thomas Hardy. The characters' deeds play a much greater role in the destruction of their own people than fate, chance, nature, or even supernatural elements. The actions of some characters make other characters either victims or victimizers. In *Jude the Obscure*, female characters are responsible for the downfall of Jude Fawley. Sue Bridehead is one of the causes of his tragedy. Her behavior indicates her insensibility when she decides to live with him without marrying him.

Chapter V deals with nature as a victimizer in Thomas Hardy's selected novels. Nature performs its role in the form of fate, chance, coincidence, and sometimes even supernatural elements. Nature is considered to be a living force with a will and purpose of its own. It is also considered to be a silent and ironic spectator of human sufferings in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. For example, when Tess has been seduced by Alec in the heart of natural surroundings, nature proves to be a favorable shelter to the seducer. It no longer proves to be a guardian angel for Tess.

Chapter VI Conclusion, consists of three parts which are major findings, pedagogical implications, and scope for further study.

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**A STUDY OF THE VICTIM-VICTIMIZER
RELATIONSHIP IN VICTORIAN FICTION WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOMAS HARDY'S
SELECTED NOVELS**

A THESIS

**SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PUNE
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH**

BY

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(June, 2013)

Certificate

It is certified that the work incorporated in the thesis entitled, "**A Study of the Victim-Victimizer Relationship in Victorian Fiction with Special Reference to Thomas Hardy's Selected Novels**", submitted by the candidate, Mohammad Naji Hussain, was carried out by him under my supervision. The material which has been obtained from other sources has been duly acknowledged in the thesis.

June, 2013

Dr. Ashok Thorat

Research Guide

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work presented in the thesis entitled, **"A Study of the Victim-Victimizer Relationship in Victorian Fiction with Special Reference to Thomas Hardy's Selected Novels"**, carried out by me, under the supervision of **Dr. A. R. Thorat** at the Institute of Advanced Studies in English (Recognized by and affiliated to the University of Pune – India) is genuine and original. It has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university, or the examining body.

June, 2013

Mohammad Naji Hussain

Research Student

DEDICATED TO

THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER WHO

WISHED TO CELEBRATE THIS

OCCASION.

(MAY MERCY BE ON HIS SPIRIT)

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Preliminaries

The relationship between victim – victimizer is an age-old issue. It begins with the birth of human beings. Relations in human society are determined by the power structure of the society. In the struggle for existence, the one who is powerful survives. The one who is weak and powerless has to yield to others and to circumstances. This view is aptly summarized in ‘Might is Right’. Those who are powerful, victimize the powerless or the weak. The poor and the weak are the natural targets of the mighty; hence, they become easy victims. The people with power control the society and institutions in the society and in this way they rule the people in the society.

The victim suffers a lot of pain, problems and disasters in his/her life. His life swings between happiness and unhappiness but it is predominantly a painful and unbearable journey from which he finds no respite / escape as he is destined to suffer. His life becomes a torturous inferno. The victimizer, on the other hand, forgets the noble human values and exploits the victim in many ways. Man is bestowed with ‘free will’. Thus, he has the choice of behavior or the way of living.

He decides how to behave with other members of society. He should be tolerant to others and he should respect the rights of other people and treat them as human beings and should not victimize them. U.S. Mathur (1968: 109) stated that:

If man has intellect, which enables him so to conceive the manner of his existence, he has also his sense of justice; and it enables him, rather compels him, to see this existence of his as a harsh and senseless violation of his profoundest belief—the belief that his sense of justice ought to be satisfied.

Thus, it is not easy for man to face hardships in life and choose a proper way to live in this world. He tries his best to avoid misfortunes. He struggles against all odds and wants to save himself from being victimized. He wishes to live happily. In fact, the problems of these people are not related to the events of their lives, but to the ways in which they deal with them. For example, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Henchard, who is the hero of the novel, could have changed his life or lot by not selling his wife and by refusing the liquor from the bar maid. U.S. Mathur (1968:112) observes:

He [Thomas Hardy] found he said, a special interest, in the failure of things to be what they were meant to be.

In Thomas Hardy's novels, the victim – victimizer relationship is one of the major concerns. Many of his characters belong to the lower class and that is why they face several problems. Some of his characters are weak and helpless while some of them are strong. Destiny, chance, coincidence, nature, social circumstances, and the actions of the characters play a dominant role in bringing about the downfall of the characters who turn in to victims.

The research deals with the relationship between the victim and victimizer in the Victorian novels in general and in Thomas Hardy's selected novels (*The Mayor of the Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*) in particular. The researcher aims to highlight the various factors or reasons responsible for victimization in Hardy's novels. Thomas Hardy is an eminent writer who is renowned for his tragic novels. Most of his novels deal with the role of fate. He also effectively makes use of nature, chance, and coincidence. These elements shape the destiny of his characters which forces them to suffer in the process of victimization.

1.2 The Statement of the Problem

Human life is subject to change. There are many forces that cause changes in life. Life is conditioned by the physical and social environment. People have their own way to deal with the world around them. The causes of victimization reside in physical, social, political, cultural, economic, moral and psychological conditions which surround the individuals. These elements are universal and exist in all societies. They have the potential to make people either victims or victimizers. Nature, fate, chance, coincidence are some more factors that cause victimization of individuals. B.R. Mullik (1957:5) comments:

In Hardy's novels fate plays a predominant part. His characters are the puppets in the hands of malignant fate which is out to thwart them in their efforts and rob them to any chance of happiness.

Victimizing people is not a good thing. So, from the beginning of human society, philosophers and prophets have tried their best to condemn victimization. However, man is basically an animal and as such he instinctively attempts to victimize his own fellow human beings for his selfish ends. U.S. Mathur (1968: 113) comments:

Human beings are of no matter or appreciable value in this nonchalant universe.

The present study investigates the causes and the negative role of circumstances surrounding man which lead to victimization of characters in the Victorian fiction in general and Thomas Hardy's novels in particular. The victim's life is marked or characterized by agony, loneliness, disappointment and desertion. This makes his life gloomy.

Thomas Hardy's novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* scrutinizes the character of Michael Henchard who sells his wife and his daughter to Newson. So, Henchard's act of selling his family shows the social abuse of his role as a head of the family which makes him victimize his family.

The social rules of the Victorian era were unjust to the people as reflected in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. It is of course a system which ruins people and drives them to their downfall. In other words, the people who follow the moral rules are not aware of the real trouble makers. For example, Alec, who is a real sinner, is not accused as a victimizer. On the contrary, Tess, who is pure, becomes a victim as she defends herself against the social abuse. In fact, she should not be considered an impure woman. People in such a society blindly follow the wrong moral rules. Consequently, innocent individuals like her are crushed down. In fact, the social rules which are responsible for Tess's suffering should be blamed and not Tess. Thus, society plays the role of victimizer which crushes innocent people cruelly and inhumanly.

Jude the Obscure is an equally pessimistic story of the life of Jude Fawley. His life is full of obscurity and frustration which victimize him. Thomas Hardy's characters represent the modern tragic problems of men and women who are affected negatively by the Victorian society. For example, most of the characters in *Jude the Obscure* such as Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead and Arabella Donn are alienated from society due to their independent thoughts, and their defiance of social conventions. They are victimized by the Victorian society. They are rejected by the society as they have rejected the old social institutions and the values these institutions represent.

The major and minor characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* become victims at one time and victimizers at another. For example, Henchard, the hero of the novel, becomes a victimizer when he sells his wife to the sailor, Newson, and consequently, Susan becomes a victim. Similarly, he becomes a victim as a result of his fate.

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess meets her tragic destiny as she is seduced by the villain of the novel, Alec, who in turn is the victimizer. U.S. Mathur (1968: 134) writes:

For a pure woman to be crushed into impurity-
there is a soul's tragedy.

Female characters play negative roles in the downfall of Jude's tragic life. Sue Bridehead is one of the causes of Jude Fawley's tragedy because her whimsical behavior contributes to her insensibility when she decides to live with Jude Fawley illegally. It is also because of her unconventional and orthodox traits. She thinks that being permanently with Jude Fawley means the end of her freedom. According to her, the relationships between man and woman are based only on sexual attractions, power and desires. Due to this reason, she neglects her lawful husband in whom she has no sexual attraction and chooses Jude as a partner without marrying him. So, she rejects lawful marriage and goes against the norms of the society to accept him as her mate. She begets two children from him without lawfully marrying him.

Nature has been presented in a state of decay in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The emotions of the characters are presented accordingly. Features such as the rotten leaves and the dust clouds symbolize the pessimistic mood of the fallen characters. Thus, nature reinforces the family's mistakes. For instance, when Susan escapes from the tent of the bar-maid after her auction by her husband, there appears a sparrow and she is identified with the sparrow. So, the natural world is a reflection of the human world. In this way, nature participates in causing the downfall of Susan by preparing and helping her escape. Albert J. Guerard (1962:98) says:

Founding itself upon an ancient psychology, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* celebrates, first of all, the subordination of the passions that link man with nature to the reason that unites him with God.

Nature and supernatural powers, like society and characters, victimize people in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Nature is considered to be the silent and ironic spectator of the human beings while people face their fate. For example, when Tess is seduced by Alec in the heart of natural surroundings, nature proves to be favourable shelter to the devil. It no longer proves to be a guardian angel for Tess. Thus, nature provides the appropriate surrounding to victimize Tess.

Finally, the death of Jude's children is another form of supernatural power which also causes tragic incident in his life. It works in the form of Little Father Time. It was Sue Bridehead who feels indifferent towards Little Father Time and in fact, she dislikes him. She creates fear in the mind of Little Father Time that they have become more in numbers as family members. Due to the increased members of the family, they will be asked to vacate their shelter and they will be shelterless. It affects the innocent and immature mind of Little Father Time. He thinks that the increased number can be reduced by killing his step brothers. The external power makes him commit this fatal act and he kills his step brothers and finally himself.

1.3 Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that Thomas Hardy's characters offer interesting and enriching enterprise if they are examined from the angle of the relationship of victim – victimizer and this kind of relationship is a consequence of environment they live in. In addition, it is very helpful to probe how Thomas Hardy's pessimism adds a unique charm to these relationships and takes this study to a higher plane of man's relation with society, nature, god and fate.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the present study is to explore the nature of relationships between Thomas Hardy's characters on one hand and society, nature, universe, and fate on the other hand from the perspective of their roles as victim – victimizer. The focus of this study is the nature of these relationships which gives rise to conflicts in Hardy's novels.

This aim is to be achieved through the following specific objectives:

1. To find out the nature of victim- victimizer relationships in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of the Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

2. To trace the psychological, social and other causes of victimization of the characters in the novels.
3. To classify and categorize these causes.
4. To explore how the process of victimization takes place in these novels.
5. To draw some general observations on the basis of this study.
6. To find out some pedagogical implications arising out of this study.
7. To explore the possibilities of further research in the related area and offer some suggestions in this regard.

1.5 Research Methodology and Selection of Data

The researcher's plan involves the following steps:

1. Close reading of the selected novels of Thomas Hardy and leading Victorian novelists,
2. Collecting sufficient, relevant and useful data from these novels,
3. Classifying and categorizing the selected data,
4. Analyzing and interpreting the data and
5. Relating the interpretations to prevalent critical views available on Thomas Hardy in particular and Victorian fiction in general.

The present research involves the library method since the study is theoretical. The researcher focuses on the critical and reference books on the writer and the age, journals, websites and contacts with some specialists in the field. Various views about victimization have been collected to support and explain such works of art. Thomas Hardy's novels have a great potential to offer the data for this kind of research.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study confines itself to only one literary genre and this genre is fiction. Again, the research related to the work of a single writer and that writer is Thomas Hardy. Further, only three novels of Hardy have been chosen for the study. They are *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The next important limitation is that these novels are to be studied from one thematic angle and that is the relationship of characters as victim – victimizer. Though the focus of the study is on the selected works of Thomas Hardy, broad references are also made to the works of some leading Victorian novelists like Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, George Eliot, etc.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study mainly deals with victim – victimizer relationship in the Victorian novels by giving a clear picture of the life of people while the industrial revolution evolved in the nineteenth century. The study sheds light on adverse effects of the social, psychological, political, cultural, moral, economic, industrial environment and the natural forces which victimized the characters in the Victorian novels in general and Thomas Hardy’s novels in particular. The novels selected for the present study are *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

The research attempts to offer an insight to future research in literature as the research extends our knowledge about the Victorian society by highlighting the causes which lead to victimization of the people. It might further open other facets to look for in other fields of study. Therefore, it will be of great benefit to the students to undertake this type of research. Furthermore, it provides the teachers of English Literature a source of resource material when teaching Thomas Hardy’s novels from the perspective of victimization as well as other perspectives related to the themes of the novels.

1.8 A Brief Critical Summary of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

The Mayor of Casterbridge is one of Thomas Hardy's pessimistic novels. The novel was published in 1886 in the Graphic magazine. The subtitle of the novel is 'A Story of a Man of Character' which mainly emphasizes the role of single character, Michael Henchard.

The Mayor of Casterbridge is one of Hardy's Wessex novels. It tells the story of Michael Henchard who is a hay-trusser travelling with his wife, Susan, and young daughter, Elizabeth-Jane. In a feat of drunkenness he sells his wife and daughter to a sailor, Newson. Next day, he repents over his misdeed and takes an oath that he will stop drinking all liquor for the next twenty-one years. Then, he starts searching for his wife and daughter. Later, he learns that the sailor, Susan, and Elizabeth-Jane have emigrated. He gives up the search and goes to Casterbridge. He works very hard and becomes the mayor of the town.

After some years, Susan and Elizabeth-Jane arrive in Casterbridge. They learn that Michael Henchard has become the mayor of the town. They are united again. He marries Susan for the sake of his daughter.

Henchard takes help of Donald Farfrae for the growth of his business. Farfrae's charm impresses all the town people and he gains the affection of Elizabeth-Jane. Later, Farfrae and Michael Henchard become rivals. Michael Henchard hires Joshua Jopp as his general manager. He orders Jopp to do all he can to throw Farfrae out of business.

Susan dies leaving a letter for Michael Henchard that is not to be opened until Elizabeth-Jane's wedding-day. The letter reveals that Michael Henchard's own daughter died, and this Elizabeth-Jane is the child of Newson. When Newson comes to enquire about his daughter, Henchard lies to him that his daughter is dead, and the sailor accepts this. Later, Michael Henchard constantly worries about Newson's return. Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae get married and the sailor comes back. Henchard has no option but to leave them. Later, Elizabeth-Jane realizes that Michael Henchard wanted to make peace with her, and she sets out to find out him. Abel Whittle, the man whom Michael Henchard wanted to fire once, looks after him in his last days. He tells Elizabeth-Jane that Michael Henchard is dead.

Tragedy is one of the concerns in this novel and it results from the fact that characters are victimized. However, the complete title of the novel is 'The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge', which justifies the tragic pathos of the characters.

It also gives an indication that there are some specific factors which play a vital role in bringing the rise and fall of the characters. These factors are the social, political, economic, industrial environment, and the psychological background of the characters. Chance, coincidence, fate, and the unpredictable power of nature also play a significant role in victimizing the characters.

The Mayor of Casterbridge describes Thomas Hardy's perception by his excessive use of victimization between man in relation to man, and between man in relation to his fate which is characterized by the negative role of society, the action of the characters, and nature. For instance, Henchard becomes a victim because of his action of selling his wife to the sailor.

1.9 A Brief Critical Summary of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is Hardy's greatest Wessex novel. It is also one of his pessimistic novels as it deals mainly with the element of fate and its negative effect upon the lives of most of the characters. The novel was published in December 1891. Though some critics describe the novel as a pessimistic, disagreeable, and immoral, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* remains one of the most popular and widely read novels.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is a sad story of a pure girl, Tess, who is raped by Alec d'Urberville against her will. As it so happens, she is pregnant and bears the child months later. Thus, Alec d'Urbervilles becomes the first and foremost victimizer and the main cause behind Tess's downfall.

When Tess becomes a milkmaid at Talbothay, she finds that Angel Clare, whom she hardly remembers, now works at the dairy. Angel Clare grows fond of Tess. He begins arranging the cows for Tess so that he can be closer to her. Tess retreats from Angel's affections until he finally declares his love for her. Tess realizes that she must tell him about her past with Alec d'Urberville so she writes Angel a letter and slips it under his doorway. It is only on the day of her wedding that she discovers that the letter had slipped under the carpet and thus Angel never found it. On their wedding night, Angel and Tess vow to tell one another their faults. Angel admits that he had a short affair with a stranger in London, while Tess admits that Alec d'Urberville raped her. After telling Angel her story, Tess begs for forgiveness, but he claims that forgiveness is irrelevant.

When Tess confronts Alec, he claims that he has a newfound duty to save others and feels that he must save Tess. Alec tells Tess that she should leave her husband because he will not come back again.

Angel decides to search for Tess. He finds her at an inn at Sandbourne, where she has been living a comfortable life with Alec d'Urberville. Tess tells Angel that it is too late because Alec convinced her that he would never return. After a heated argument, she stabs Alec in the heart and kills him. When Angel leaves the town, he finds Tess following him. She admits that she has killed Alec, and the two continue along together to escape. Finally, a group of men surround Angel and Tess to capture her and arrest her for Alec's murder. Tess is executed for her crime.

Thomas Hardy calls the heroine of the novel as a pure woman as she remains pure even after her seduction by Alec. Tess can be also called pure because she confesses to Angel Clare the real story of her seduction by her relative. She emphasizes her faithful love with Angel Clare. Likewise, Tess has to bear her husband's disappearance on the wedding night.

1.10 A Brief Critical Summary of *Jude the Obscure*

Jude the Obscure is Thomas Hardy's cosmic and complex tragedy. It is his last novel which was published in 1895. It is also one of his pessimistic and the most surprising and strange novels as it deals with love of two cousins who fall in love but each one of them marries the wrong person. Thus, each one of them becomes victim as a result of their own actions.

Furthermore, it is a story which describes the tragedy of the victim hero, Jude Fawley who fails to achieve his ambition of becoming a scholar at Christminster University.

Jude the Obscure is a story of Jude Fawley who is a poor orphan. Mr. Richard Phillotson inspires him to become a scholar. Jude cannot achieve his aim because of his poverty and because of his involvement with Arabella. He tries to study Greek and Latin on his own by borrowing books from Vilbert. He also learns to be a stone-mason when he is nineteen years old. Jude marries Arabella in spite of his aunt's opposition. He is tricked into the marriage because of the false claim of Arabella that she is pregnant. After her marriage with Jude she confesses to him that she was not pregnant. So, Jude is disillusioned with her and he tries to commit suicide. She runs away with her parents to Australia.

In Christminster, Jude falls in love with his attractive cousin, Sue Bridehead. He talks to her frankly about his previous marriage. Sue Bridehead decides not to marry him, but she marries Richard Phillotson instead. She is not happy with her husband and so she leaves him and lives with Jude.

When Jude and his family come to Christminster, they face the problem of accommodation which is mainly because of the children. This makes Little Father Time, Arabella's son from Jude, kill Sue Bridehead's children from Jude and himself.

Jude works hard and obtains lodgings in Beersheba. Sue Bridehead feels guilty. She believes that her children were sacrificed because of her sins. She also thinks that she is still Richard Phillotson's wife. She regularly goes to the church. She can no longer love Jude and finally she goes back to Richard Phillotson. Jude laments that Sue Bridehead has never loved him passionately. He begs her to stay with him, but she leaves him. Finally, after his final visit to Sue Bridehead in freezing weather, Jude becomes seriously sick and dies.

Jude is defeated by his own passions for women and sex. He cannot control his passions, so he cannot achieve his goal of becoming a scholar; for physical pleasures he sacrifices his intellectual pursuits. Moreover, university education is not meant for poor people like him.

The novel deals mainly with the passion of human beings. Hardy describes it as the deadly war waged between flesh and spirit, the fret and fever, derision and disaster, and the tragedy of unfulfilled aims. Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead become victims of their own desires as they could not control their attractions for each other. They neglect their passion for learning and don't pursue scholarship at Christminster. Sex plays a crucial role in victimizing Jude Fawley when he succumbs to his sexual desire towards the charm of Arabella Donn, and the romanticism of Sue Bridehead.

In other words, he becomes a victim as he is caught between war of flesh and spirit as Arabella Donn represents the flesh and Sue Bridehead represents the spirit which confuses him till he reaches his downfall. Thus, he is described as the lonely individual who is involved in a personal struggle as much of his fight is with himself in fulfilling his wishes.

1.11 Scheme of Chapterisation

This study comprises of six chapters:

Chapter I ‘Introduction’ provides the background of the present research. It gives a brief description of the concept of victimization. The problem, hypothesis, and the objectives of the study are also presented. This is followed by the research methodology, scope and limitations, significance of the study and the scheme of chapterisation. Furthermore, this chapter provides brief critical summaries of Thomas Hardy’s selected novels.

Chapter II deals with the theoretical background of the study. The survey of the Victorian literature provides a clear picture of the nature of victimization. This chapter also explores victimization in the Victorian Era. It further explores the aspects of victim- victimizer relationship. This chapter also deals with the victim – victimizer relationship by various Victorian novelists such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, and

George Eliot. Finally, this chapter provides adequate information about Thomas Hardy's perception of victimization.

Chapter III deals with society as a victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. Society inflicts suffering on individuals through its outworn conventions and superficial values. Society makes its people suffer because of its insistence on some desirable social standards. For example, Michael Henchard asks his stepdaughter not to behave beneath her actual social class, even though he and his family were at one time a part of the lower class. Society has rigid conventions which make people either victims or victimizers and the negative role of society ruins the life of the characters.

Society has rigid conventions which make people either victims or victimizers in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Some of the people during the Victorian era were victimized due to the hostile and negative attitudes of other people. For example, some of the preachers paint a damning of the biblical texts on the fence of one of the churches. This indicates that these people followed a weak theology. It also shows the negative attitude of the people towards life. Such negative attitudes affect innocent and religious people and keep them away from religious activities.

The negative role of society ruins the life of the characters in *Jude the Obscure*. Society appears to be the cause for breaking the happy life of most of the characters in this novel. The love relationships between Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead, and Arabella Donn appear strange and impossible. This is because the rules of the churches in the Victorian society do not approve and accept the idea of being in love without marriage.

Chapter IV deals with characters as victimizers in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The characters' deeds play a much greater role for the destruction of their people than fate, chance, nature, or even supernatural elements in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. For instance, when Henchard is at the fair at Weydon Priors with Susan and baby Elizabeth Jane, he hastily sells his wife for five guineas to a sailor because he commits the mistake of drinking too much alcohol.

Most of the characters in *Tess of the d' Urbervilles* are wretched, miserable, and in a state of damnation. This is because Hardy's conception is tragic. Tess's life becomes completely sorrowful when she requests the priest to help her to bury her baby according to the Christian rules. The priest refuses to help her because she has become pregnant before marriage. Moreover, she is not descendent from a noble family. As a result, Tess and her baby becomes the priest's victims.

The actions of the characters make other characters either victims or victimizers in *Jude the Obscure*. Thus, fate, chance, nature, and even the supernatural powers become less effective in the lives of the people than the deeds of characters. For example, female characters play negative role in the downfall of Jude Fawlye's tragic life. Sue Bridehead is one of the causes of his tragedy. This is because her behavior indicates her craziness when she decides to live with him illegally.

Chapter V deals with nature as a victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. Nature plays a far greater role in the destruction of its people than society and characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. It comes in the shape of fate, chance, coincidence, and the supernatural elements. The domination of the weather is presented twice in the novel. The first time is when the rain ruins Henchard's preparations for a grand entertainment. The second time is when Henchard speculates heavily on the weather and loses. As a result, he faces bankruptcy.

Nature is considered to be a living force with a will and purpose of its own. It is also considered to be a silent and ironic spectator of human suffering in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. For example, when Alec rapes Tess in the heart of natural surroundings, nature proves to be shelter to the devil. It no longer proves to be a guardian angel for Tess. Thus, it plays the role of victimizing Tess's life indirectly, if not directly.

To some extent, nature negatively affects the happy lives of the characters in *Jude the Obscure*. The elements of fate, chance, the supernatural powers are the forms through which nature works negatively against the characters. For example, Jude Fawley's becomes a victim to fate and as a result he cannot fulfill his aim to study in Christminster. This happens because, by chance, he meets a very attractive and beautiful woman, Arabella Donn, and becomes her victim as he neglects his concern of pursuing his studies in Christminster.

Chapter VI is the concluding chapter of the thesis. It states the main findings, pedagogical implications, and suggestions for further research.

1.12 Conclusion

The researcher has provided the technical elements required for the present research in this chapter such as, stating the problem of the study as well as the hypotheses. The aims and objectives and the research methodology are clearly designed and stated. The researcher defined the scope and limitations of the study and showed the significance of the research. Finally, brief critical summaries of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, and *Jude the Obscure* have been given along with the scheme of chapterisation of the thesis. The definitions and discussions of these elements support the researcher to analyze and interpret the outline of the research topic to achieve the aims of the study. The next chapter provides the theoretical background to the study.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Preliminaries

The Victorian age was the era of many social and political upheavals. It witnessed a variety of changes in science and technology. These changes transformed the lives of the people and influenced their conventional outlook of life. This age was also an era of several unsettling social developments. Therefore, Victorian literature was greatly affected by these changes. Major Victorian writers dealt with these changes and how these changes challenged and questioned their views on religion, beliefs, morals, social and political controversies and issues. Their literature is a representative picture of the reality of their time. This enabled the writers to write about the sufferings of the people of that age. Thus, their writings reflect and question the growth of the new values of democracy, education, materialism, religion, science, and evolution.

Charles Darwin's '*On the Origin of Species (1859)*' has challenged and shattered many religious beliefs of the Victorian age. Many writers of this age were shocked by Darwin's theory of evolution, because it caused a revolution in biological science and greatly affected the religious thoughts. Furthermore, Darwin's theory contradicts with the biblical account of the creation of life. It questions the very basic Christian belief of the creation of man and genesis of the universe.

The Bible asserted that God created man in His own image whereas Darwin demonstrated that man is the product of evolution though he is the crown of the evolutionary process. His theory also showed that 'survival of the fittest' is the law of nature and nature is unscrupulous as it observes no moral laws. Hence, such a theory and other scientific advancements made people skeptical about the traditional values of life. They were torn between two worlds- science and religion, faith and doubt. They lost their peace of mind and were shockingly upset by these developments in science. In other words, people were terribly confused in such revolutionary changes.

Another equally powerful shock came from industrialization. New methods of large-scale production by machines changed the very structure of human society of that time. Cities grew in size and number. Along with urbanization there were slums. A new poor working class was born. The industrialists / capitalists exploited these workers as there were no favourable laws on the side of the workers. Even innocent children were put to work in squalid conditions. They were poorly paid and cruelly and inhumanly maltreated and abused. The society, the state and the Church neglected these children and women. Charles Dickens and William Blake represented the dark aspects of this age very vividly and powerfully in their works. The poor and weak sections of the society, especially the helpless women and children, were worst affected. Such women had to sell themselves for their livelihood. No one had mercy for these poor souls. Thomas Carlyle exposed the ills of the age and advocated for the basic and old values of life.

Victorian society provided a great opportunity for the emergence of the romances and pessimistic novels. These types of novels represent almost every aspect of nineteenth century of the Victorian life. For example, *Tess of the d'Uberilles*, which is one of the pessimistic novels by Thomas Hardy, portrays the story of the trapped and victimized girl, Tess, who pays a very heavy price for no fault of her as she is raped by Alec d'Uberilles. Charles Dickens' novels are more representative and realistic. He dealt with the people who were inhumanly victimized. His novels depict many aspects of the social reality like incest, crime, pain, adulation, and antagonism toward women.

2.2 Victimization in the Victorian Era

The Victorian period was an era of violence, disturbance, and revolutions. The industrial revolution threw thousands of artisans out of employment and ruined large number of factory labourers. It was a new form of slavery for the helpless and weak men, women, and children.

Victorian Age is also marked by the growth of democracy. It also witnessed the conflict for the political rights and the sluggish expansion of the privilege to the upper middle class. John Mulgan (1964:111) comments:

By the time Queen Victoria came to the throne the Industrial Revolution was in full career and the green fields of England were being buried beneath slag-heaps from the mines and covered by smoke from factory chimneys. Ugly, brick-built towns were extending throughout the midlands and the north. With this vast industrial development went a wave of agitation and reform which expressed itself in the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1829, the Reform Bill 1832, and the suppression of slavery in the British possessions overseas 1833. These were no more than first steps in long struggle for religious and social freedom that continued throughout the century and has not ended in our own time.

Thus, the industrial revolution contributed a great deal in victimizing the people of this era. For example, factory workers worked for more than fifteen hours a day for their daily wages. Longer working hours squeezed them out and left them no time for rest and food. They were savagely exploited and dehumanized.

The Victorian laws further victimized the lower class people. Workers who were rich were aided and compensated if they had accidents or if they were sick, while no one gave a helping hand to the poor workers in similar cases. Philip Davis (2002: 13) comments:

The new steam-powered industrial organization created social problems which there was as yet no corresponding civic organization designed to remedy: problem of housing and the use of space; problems of public health, sanitation, sewerage, ventilation, paving, and water supply, in the face of cholera, typhus, and consumption; problems concerning working conditions.

The Victorian social attitudes, too, played a crucial role in victimizing the behaviour of the people. Charles Dickens *Hard Times* exposes the ideas that governed the utilitarian industrialism and its effects on human life. Philip Davis (2002: 14) states:

The greatest change in English social history took place, within decades, in a society that itself lacked any approved pattern of behaviour with which to accommodate the phenomenon of change.

Furthermore, the expansion of the new industrial towns in the Victorian era deepened the tragic economic situation. This increased the proliferation of slums and the exploitation of the poor people. Homelessness emerged as one of the critical problems especially for those who were unable to work. As a result of that, crimes in the dark and dirty streets increased and old and sick people were victimized. Likewise, the lower class people suffered a lot as they could not afford the bare minimum necessities of life. Thus, workers having low, hard and poor jobs looked weak and broken and had no energy to work for long hours in a day. Consequently, the industrial revolution brought more poverty, pain, frustration and corruption in the society than progress, peace, solace and comfort. On the contrary, this era saw the growth of the victimizing class of powerful people - land lords, factory owners, upper classes, etc. Deirdre David (2001: 78) comments:

Viewed as potentially violent – even revolutionary – and as carriers of both physical and moral disease, the working class was physically pushed into inadequate spaces for living and working within these cities, nearly to the point of being pushed of sight of most members of the middle and upper classes.

Social and moral norms condition the behavior, thinking and character of the people living in a particular society. The Victorian society had its own codes for the conduct of its people. These codes laid some restrictions on the freedom of the people in that era. It restricted their lives to a large extent. For example, it was socially unacceptable for a lady to ride a bicycle and socially undesirable for a man to smoke in public. There are several rules to regulate the sexual desire of man / woman. Marriage is social institution which is highly controlled by certain conventions, rules and norms. These rules must be followed to get the sanction of the society for the relations between man and woman. It is through marriage that man and woman satisfy their sexual urge and sex before, without and outside marriage is banned in traditional communities. There are rules- who should get married / with whom, when, how and why should they marry, etc. The main purpose of sex for the Victorian society was for reproduction and not mere pleasure alone. Sex was allowed between married couples only and that too for the sake of reproduction. However, prostitution grew on large scale in Victorian era. Poor women had no option but to sell themselves. Thus, prostitutes were exploited and consequently they were considered as social outcast. They lost their self – respect and honour. They were forced to struggle for their very existence. These women were looked down upon by the society and the Church. They were considered indecent, disgusting, immoral and low. Moreover, these prostitutes became victims as they lost their virginity and their reputation in the eyes of society as they were thought of being nymphomaniac.

Victorian conventions made them believe that such women were not worth marrying as they were feared to seek more extramarital relations. They were further victimized as they lost their virginity before marriage, and they would never get married because no decent man would marry a woman who wasn't a virgin. Girls like Tess who were raped and compelled to become mothers faced the same destiny.

The invention and introduction of the steam locomotive accelerated the growth of the British economy. Yet, the cultural impacts which resulted from the flourishing British economy affected the lower class people adversely. The railways brought pollution, slums and crimes along with it. Ralph Pite (2004: 25) comments:

There were new ways forward in life and new dangers. A widespread fear developed, for instance, of the growing cities' overcrowded slums. The urban masses appeared anarchic and revolutionary because, living in the poverty and disease, they seemed likely both to infect and overthrow their masters.

The new inventions and machines affected the culture of the age. The cultural impact was manifested in the train's intrusion into the rural regions of Britain. However, the English people have a deep love for the countryside because they believe that their countryside is their divine gift. Thus, they showed no respect to the trains and disliked them because they destroyed the beauty of their mother land.

The British economy also improved with the arrival of the trains as it provided quick transportation to travel and move things from place to place. However, the urbanized people were victimized as they lacked employment in the city / suburb. They suffered a lot to pursue their careers within the suburbs. John Mulgan (1964:112) states:

The Victorian age was an age of imperial glory and expansion; it was equally an age of trouble and doubt and bitterness.

Socially, the Victorian people were further victimized because crimes increased in the society after the introduction of the railway system in England. The crimes resulted due to the industrialization of that era. However, this situation came in to existence because of the increasing of the migration of unskilled labors to the urban regions. The unskilled laborers were victimized because they were compelled to live in slums and they were exploited by capitalists in factories. In this way, urbanization turned the cities in to a melting pot for diversified forms of criminality which mainly included violent assault as well as property crimes.

2.3 Aspects of Victim- Victimizer Relationship

Oxford English Dictionary defines victim as ‘a person who has been attacked, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, a disease, an accident, etc’. It is also defines as a person or thing destroyed or sacrificed in the pursuit of an object, in gratification of a passion, and due to the jealousy, lust, or ambition. It is further defined as a person or living creature destroyed by, or suffering grievous injury from fortune or from accident. Further, victim is someone who suffers due to someone else's actions or beliefs, or due to unpleasant circumstances. However, the main causes of victimizing a person are psychological, political, social, cultural, religious, moral, sexual, and the unpredictable natural forces.

The negative experiences received by an individual from society may make him think that he is a victim. He constructs his own image of being a victim. Moreover, being a victim is psychologically an acquired personal trait. The emotional states of the victim are remorse, vindictiveness, anger, sadness and fear. These features are clearly observed in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. For example, the female protagonist of the novel, Suzan becomes a victim as she has to accept Henchard's action of selling her to a sailor. Suzan's emotional state makes her feel that she is socially inferior to respectable ladies / women of her time. Ismail Salami (1999:301) observes:

His [Thomas Hardy] works are deeply psychological, filled with misguided love, and closely concerned with the thoughts and feelings of women.

Every society is characterized by its values, ideas and customs. In other words, we can say that a society has its own culture which varies in time and space. A person becomes victim to the value, ideas, and customs of the people who live in specific reign, place, or a country. In other words, he becomes victim to the other people's culture. The behavioral patterns distinguish people from others socially, politically, economically, and morally. Culture can be transmitted or acquired through such modes of action. It victimizes the life of people because they acquire these behavioral patterns, lifestyles, social structures and norms. For instance, when Alec d' Urbervilles becomes a preacher in the Low Church movement, he requests Tess to forgive him for his sinful act of seduction and return to him as he claims that he is fully reformed. However, when he sees Tess again, he immediately leaves the church to pursue her for her sexual exploitation. He is not changed or reformed. He considers her to be an object to satisfy his carnal desires; she is not treated as a respectable person having her own self-respect and identity.

Religious beliefs and practices differ from culture to culture. They also tend to be conservative. These orthodox beliefs preserve the prevailing social conventions and relational patterns of behaviour just because they are old and deemed to have divine origin. Therefore, people become victims as they apply these beliefs to their lives.

For example, when Tess was pregnant, she wanted to visit the church. Soon, though, she decides not to visit the church again because the parishioners look doubtfully and critically at her pregnancy. She realizes that the orthodox churchmen consider her as an impure woman. She is not 'virgin Mary'. Tess suffers even at the hand of the church, which is supposed to be the holy and secure place for her. The result is that she becomes a victim because people apply the religious beliefs wrongly. Thus, the main negativity of religion is not from the religion itself. It is from wayward followers who believe that their way is the only right, valid and proper way, and exactly for that they are justified in violating the rights and freedoms of others. Dale Kramer (1999: 56) comments:

One manifestation of the way Christianity remained a persistent influence on Hardy's writings is that his fiction is saturated with biblical allusions.

Finally, it is true that man victimizes man / men but it is also observed that unpredictable natural forces also victimize human beings very severely. Nature plays a vital role in victimizing the human beings through climatic changes and other calamities which ruin people and their plans. Man is incapable to challenge the great unpredictable power of nature. For example, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the domination of the weather is presented twice. In the first instance, the rain ruins Henchard's preparations for a grand entertainment, whereas in the second instance, Henchard faces bankruptcy as he speculates heavily on the weather and loses.

2.4 The Victim-Victimizer relationship in the Victorian Novels

Charles Dickens was born in 1812 near Port Sea. He made his first visit to America in 1842. Then, he became the first editor of the *Daily News*. He was a famous writer of his time as he focused his attention on the childhood agony, the poor dysfunctional families of the initial Victorian era and the less fortunate in an English society. He was greatly affected by the industrial revolution of the Victorian era and these issues were reflected in his writings. As he was a poor boy, he worked in a factory. He was treated with no respect. Many children like him, had to work in cruel, squalid and dangerous conditions. For example, *Oliver Twist* represents Dickens's childhood. Oliver also worked in a factory like his creator. Oliver became victim just like Dickens as he was exploited by the factory owner. He worked very hard for many hours a day so that he would get a meal, and a place to sleep.

Furthermore, children were verbally and physically abused by their parents, and the upper class workmen of the English society. Charles Dickens dealt with these issues realistically in his writing. He challenged these issues and argued that paupers and criminals are not evil at birth; they are not born criminals but they turn bad because the world deals with them inhumanly and circumstances lead them to become criminals. All these issues come out in his writings like *David Copperfield*. David was verbally ['Beware of him, he bites'] and physically abused by his parents when his step-father used to beat him and his mother used to throw a great deal of guilt on him.

A young boy such as David becomes victim as he is emotionally, psychologically, and physically abused by his parents.

Solitariness is the distinguishing quality of Charles Dickens' characters. His people live in a world of their own. They do not talk to one another. They talk to themselves. There are problems created by society as individuals are segregated in to different classes which represent diverse values and so they cannot communicate with other members of the society. They are alienated from society. In Dickens's world, one character becomes the victim of another character. They are victims either of society, circumstances, industrialization or laws. They are aware of the social issues but they cannot communicate with others. They stand very close to reality and deal with the problems and harshness of the real world. They are absorbed in their own worries and problems.

David Copperfield is a heartwarming story by Charles Dickens. The story is about a young boy named David Copperfield. He undergoes many struggles throughout his life. It is a novel of selfish exploitation, ardent jealousy and sexual worsen. All these aspects play a vital role in victimizing the characters of this novel. Dickens wanted to show what life was to him. In other words, he wanted to show that the story of the novel is closely related to him because he was also a victim as he underwent many struggles throughout his life. So, the novel is autobiographical. The full original title of the novel, 'The Personal History, Adventures, Experience, and Observation of David Copperfield', proves that.

For example, Charles Dickens's father, John Dickens, does not seem to have been a warm and pleasant father, but his lack of responsibility, especially with money, later leads his family into serious difficulties. The story deals with the consequences of love and its preservation in human life. A.E. Dyson (1968: 195) says:

David's love is called the first mistaken impulses
of an undisciplined heart.

Charles Dickens shows the shocking and terrible abuse of the weak, helpless and wretched people throughout *David Copperfield*. He shows that exploitation is the rule in an industrial society. He concentrates on orphans, women, and the mentally disabled persons in his novels. He draws up on his own experience as a child to describe the inhumanity of child labor. David starves and suffers in a wine-bottling factory as a child. Though Dickens' characters suffer due to the punishment at the hands of external forces, they remain morally good. The sufferings of the innocent make the novel very powerful, pathetic and effective.

Mr. Murdstone exploits David as a factory laborer, because he is small / young. Similarly, the boys at Salem House have no refuge against the cruel Mr. Creakle. As a result, the children are deprived of the care and affection of their natural parents and suffer at the hands of their own so-called protectors who are, in fact, cruel and inhuman. Thus, children become the victims of the insensitive and cruel society.

David Copperfield never stands against the powerful unjust people in his society. For example, David doesn't stand up to Mr. Murdstone and challenge his authority. On the contrary, he escapes to the wealthy Miss Betsey, whose financial stability enables her to shelter him from menacing Mr. Murdstone. In other words, David has weak personality as he has no support of a strong family. Thus, he becomes a victim and he is aware that he is victim but he is helpless and so he cannot muster his courage to fight against the oppressive forces. He is simply unable to do so. A.E. Dyson (1968: 195) observes:

David's folly, his blindness to her [Miss Betsey] incompetence, begins with spelling lessons at Blunder stone, and ends with a disastrous marriage and another death.

Dickens criticizes the views of his society which considers wealth and high class as measures of a person's value. He uses Steerforth, who is wealthy and powerful but these traits are more likely to corrupt than improve a person's character. Steerforth is treacherous and self-absorbed. On the other hand, both Mr. Peggotty and Ham are poor, generous, sympathetic characters. Thus, Dickens uses two kinds of characters in his novels - the first one, the victimizers, and the second one, the victims.

During Dickens's time, many people had the belief that those who are poor deserve to suffer because of their inherent deficiencies. On the other hand, he sympathizes with the poor and implies that their problems result from society's inequities and not from their own failings. Thus,

there is an emphasis on the society as a victimizer in Charles Dickens' novels.

Dickens does not show that all poor people are absolutely noble and that all rich people are utterly evil – minded. David was defrauded by poor people frequently when he was young, even though he himself is poor and helpless. Dickens does not paint a black and white moral picture but shows that wealth and class are unreliable indicators of character and morality. Finally, he allows his readers to judge his characters based on their individual deeds and qualities, and not on the way the cruel world deals them. As a result, sometimes the characters themselves become victims because of their own deeds. Martin Price (1967: 27) observes:

In Dickens, environment constantly exceeds its material limitations. Its mode of existence is altered by the human purposes and deeds it circumscribes, and its animation is antagonistic; it fearfully intrudes upon the soul.

Great Expectations is one of Charles Dickens' best novels. The story is about the adventurous life of the orphaned Philip Pirrip, who calls himself Pip. He learns the true value of the people he has met throughout his life. Suffering is endless in this novel as it is as a constant aspect of human existence. Suffering is of two types, the emotional suffering and the physical suffering.

These sufferings become the main causes of the characters' victimization in this novel. A character is a victim to another character who in turn is still victim to another one. Pip, Magwitch, and Joe are the best examples that Charles Dickens uses to describe the concept of victimization. Martin Price (1967: 158) says:

Great Expectations is in the first place a fantasy. It is a fantasy of a sort that many children have; perhaps all children have it, and certainly all lonely children, all children who feel too little wanted or appreciated, who feel the powerlessness of childhood.

The characterization of Magwitch reveals the central idea of victimization more powerfully than any other character in the novel. It is Dickens's central concern to convey the brutality and harshness of the law and society in Victorian England. He creates a dominant character who is victimized by the outer world, law, etc. Therefore, his destiny leads him to early crime and the consequent punishment by an indifferent and hostile society. Martin Price (1967: 159) observes:

He [Magwitch] is everything that a weak and passive child fears in the adult world: its capacity for wickedness, the brutality of its emotions, its strength and violence and consummate egoism, the threat of being utterly outcast and utterly alone.

Dicken's characters are not born criminals. For example, Magwitch has been victimized by a greater and more terrible criminal, Compeyson. Compeyson exploits Magwitch and uses him against all his enemies. He becomes increasingly ensnared in Compeyson's criminal activities. Compeyson is a cruel and sophisticated villain with good social connections and Magwitch becomes his partner. As a result, Magwitch becomes a victim to the criminal world of Compeyson.

Thereafter, when Magwitch and Compeyson have been captured and brought into custody, Magwitch becomes a victim to the injustice and ruthlessness of the law enforcing agency. They pass a harsher punishment to him than to the original villain Compeyson. This is because he has previous records of criminal activities while Compeyson seems a gentleman with good and upper social lineage. After that, Magwitch also becomes a victim of the legal system. He has to risk his life and so he escapes from the prison, Huck. He is recaptured and brought to trial and accordingly sentenced to death.

Pip is a victim to his sister Mrs. Joe Gargery. Pip, the orphan, suffers a good deal because she abuses and rebukes him and physically torments him. Young Pip's victimization at the hand of the close relatives of Mrs. Joe Gargery is evident at the dinner party given on the occasion of Christmas Eve. Every guest at the party rebukes and abuses him without any interruption. Meantime, his sister reminds him of all the troubles and pains she has suffered while bringing him up. Besides she recounts all the vicious and wicked tasks he has committed. Thus, from

an early life he is victimized not only by Mrs. Joe Gargery but also by other characters such as Miss Havisham, Estella and Orlick. He is also a victim of his own ambition to become a gentleman.

Joe Gargery is also victimized by his wife, his father, Orlick, and Pip's vanity and snobbery. In fact, Joe's marriage with Pip's sister proves to be a complete mismatch. The husband and wife are quite opposite in nature and temperament. Joe Gargery is a good-natured, mild, and easy-going man. In contrast, his wife is a hot tempered, cruel and treacherous woman. Martin Price (1967: 163) comments:

Life for Joe is a perpetual marrying and giving in marriage. He constantly gives his heart and accepts the mixed consequences of his generosity.

The mismatch between Joe and his wife victimizes him. He is also victimized by his father in his early childhood. His father is a drunkard who loves wine. Therefore, Joe and his mother become victims as a result of his father's temperament. Joe again becomes a victim to Orlick's villainy and evil design. He also becomes a victim to Pip's vanity and snobbery when he goes to London on his mission to become a gentleman. Finally, it is clearly noticed that Charles Dickens presents victimization in his novel in two ways. The first one is on a personal level between Joe and his wife, while the second one is on the social level. A.E. Dyson (1968: 253) says:

Two kinds of crime form Dickens' two chief themes, the crime of parent against child, and the calculated social crime.

William Thackeray is another famous English novelist of the 19th century. He was famous for his satirical works, particularly *Vanity Fair* which portrays how the social life of the Victorian era victimizes its people. He depicts a society in which appearance is one of the reasons of victimizing its people. People try to create the illusion, with the help of money and reputation, of perfect happiness and financial comfort to be considered a respectable member of society. *Vanity Fair* is one of William Thackeray's social novels. The title of the novel comes from John Bunyan's allegorical story, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It is a novel without hero which satirizes society in early 19th century Britain.

In *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray gives an insight into how the more powerful and rich people victimize others by distinguishing themselves from the common people. He, further, emphasizes the importance of pedigree in this world that is full of vanities. He portrays a corrupt society which is characterized by its members' liability to deterioration. In other words, every character in the novel displays vanities. For example, Rebecca's character serves as the ultimate example of the corrupt individual. Thus, she becomes the first and foremost victimizer because she is the most selfish character in *Vanity Fair*. Her only concern is her own ambition to become a person of distinction and in order to achieve her aim she will do anything.

The story is about the struggle to establish oneself in society. The story is held together by one theme which is the foibles and deceptions of the inhabitants of *Vanity Fair*. The aim of the novel is to represent man's sinful attachment to worldly things. The conflict is always between man against man. William Thackeray focuses on human nature in all aspects from motherhood / childhood to death and from poverty to prosperity in this novel. W.R. Goodman (2008: 388) comments:

The artistic motive force of *Vanity Fair* is Thackeray's vision bourgeois society and of the personal relationships engendered by that society.

William Thackeray shows moral corruption and decay in *Vanity Fair*. Prince Myshkin is the first character who enters the world of moral corruption. Thackeray ironically shows that money not only makes one a better human being, but it can also buy one a beautiful bride. For example, Nastassya Filippovna who is a very beautiful and intelligent woman is dishonored and consequently destroyed because of the corrupt society. The world of the novel is also full of drunkards and rogues. Society is full of superficiality. For instance, Myshkin is morally superior to the world he enters but his effect on this world is ultimately a mix of positive and negative. Though Myshkin attempts to help those around him, he drives several of them to destruction. In this way, he becomes the victimizer because of his own deeds.

Wuthering Heights is the only novel Emily Bronte wrote. The title of the novel comes from the Yorkshire Moors around which the story centers. The story is an encompassing and passionate tale. *Wuthering Heights* is not just a love story; it is a window into the human soul, where one sees the loss, suffering, self discovery, and triumph of the characters in this novel. In *Wuthering Heights*, love is a mysterious force with intense power. It is mainly about the love between Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, and how this unresolved passion eventually destroys them and many around them. It also shows how money can easily come between someone you love and destroy them.

The story moves around two parallel love affairs. The first half of the novel centers on the love between Catherine and Heathcliff. Catherine and Heathcliff's passion is the source of the major conflicts in the novel. The love of Catherine and Heathcliff is deeply rooted in their childhood companionship. Their love is also marked by the refusal to change. The love of Catherine and Heathcliff is based on their shared perception that they are identical. Their love denies difference. It is strangely asexual. They refuse to kiss each other in dark corners or arrange secret trysts as adults do. They are victimized by each other. Their asexual love is based upon their refusal to change over time or embrace differences in others.

Catherine loves Heathcliff. She loves him sincerely, but, because of her brother, she can never marry Heathcliff. Thus, she becomes a victim to the misbehavior of her brother.

Therefore, she marries Edgar to get Heathcliff out of Catherine's brother. Heathcliff has no money. He realizes that too because he could not go anywhere or be anyone without money. In a way Catherine buys Heathcliff's freedom by marrying Edgar. Heathcliff becomes a victim of his own poverty and Catherine's action of marrying Edgar. As a result, he leaves Wuthering Heights.

The second half of the novel features the developing love between young Catherine and Edgar. Catherine and Edgar's love story is the most important feature in the novel. It involves change and growth. He becomes a loyal friend to young Catherine. He seems completely alien to Catherine's world because Catherine marries him to protect Heathcliff. In choosing to marry Edgar, Catherine seeks a more genteel life, but she refuses to adapt to her role as wife, either by sacrificing Heathcliff or embracing Edgar. Thus, both the characters are the victims of Catherine's misbehavior. Catherine's love for Heathcliff deeply hurts Edgar because he truly loves her, but she would never know that. Edgar also becomes victim because of the confusion in love from Catherine's part which caused an extreme pain to him. He does his best to please and make her feel loved. Thus, being in love sometimes can be a confusing and painful thing, Emily Bronte approves the same in her book. David Daiches (1969:1066) comments:

It is the work of woman who-whatever the psychological explanation—cut herself off deliberately from normal human intercourse and lived throughout her short life in a private world of

imaginary passion.

Finally, *Wuthering Heights* presents a vision of life as a process of change, and celebrates this process over and against the romantic intensity of its principal characters. W.R. Goodman (2008: 400) observes:

Despite its exaggerated touches, *Wuthering Heights* is an intriguing tale of revenge, and the main figures exist in a more than life-size vitality of their own consuming passions.

The Mill on the Floss is a novel by George Eliot. The novel details the lives of Tom and Maggie Tulliver. It is about a brother and sister growing up on the River Floss near the village of St. Oggs in England. George Eliot shows how the past of the childhood affects Tom and Maggie in *The Mill on the Floss*. The childhood of Tom and Maggie becomes the past for the rest of the novel. Maggie holds the memory of her childhood and her connection to that time comes to affect her future behavior. The past is not something to be escaped nor is it something that will rise again to threaten the characters of this novel. George Eliot shows that the effectiveness of the past is an inherent part of Maggie's character. George Eliot uses different ways to present the concept of victimization by referring to the concept of the past in *The Mill on the Floss*. W.R. Goodman (2008: 407) comments:

The Mill on the Floss, shows signs of growing perplexity on the part of the author, of a hesitation between her art and her message.

This novel clearly states that life with a problematic past is very painful. For instance, the memories of Maggie's childhood are very unbearable to her. Because of her troubled past, she can not take a view of her present situation. As a result, the past plays a dominant role in causing some troubles in the lives of the characters in this novel. People are very much in need of their past to form one's character. Finally, without recognition of the past, one is left only to the whims of the moment and subject to emotional extremities and eventual loneliness. The novel tracks the growth of the particular society of St. Oggs. George Eliot alludes to the effect of these communal forces on Maggie's and Tom's formation. She also refers to the detailed background of St. Oggs society. It functions as a contrast in which Maggie seems fresh, simple and genuine.

George Eliot shows that society is never revealed to be a completely determining factor in the destiny of the main characters in her novel. For instance, Maggie's tragedy originates in her internal competing impulses, not in her public disgrace. Nevertheless, George Eliot emphasizes on the social and economic parts of the society. She asserts that these two factors affect characters very much.

2.5 Thomas Hardy's Perception of the Victim – Victimizer Relationship

Thomas Hardy was born on 2nd June, 1840, in the village of Upper Backhampton. He called this region as Wessex in which he grew up in the mid-1800 century. For Thomas Hardy, Dorset is a rural and unsophisticated area which is inhabited by the rustic and superstitious people. He has used nature as a part of human life which played a vital role in victimizing its people. Ismail Salami (1999: 289) states:

For Hardy, Wessex was an ideal location for him to present a world in which nature plays a key role, people work hard for their living, and fate has a strong hold over human life.

From an early age, Hardy had begun to realize the cruelty of nature. Thus, the event influenced his thinking negatively because once he and his father observed a half frozen bird in the garden. His father tried to shoo away the bird but instead it fell dead. B. R Mullik (1957: 1) observes:

Hardy's concept of life was essentially tragic. He was one of those who think life by no means a boon. For him, happiness is an occasional episode in a general drama of pain.

These elements show that Hardy has been caught in a prison of suffering because of the diversity he had in his past life which is reflected in the victimization of his characters. W.R. Goodman (2008:

225) comments:

Hardy's conception of life is of the somber tinge [sic] that gravitates towards the facts that wring the heart and depress the mind. Life is a punishment inflicted by an indiscriminating hand seems to be a conclusion sadly in accord with modern thought.

Thomas Hardy belongs to the Victorian era. He is a well-known novelist. He remains one of the greatest English literary pessimists of the Victorian era. Most of his novels are tragic and pessimistic. It is said that in the world of Hardy suffering is endless. In fact, Hardy's outlook of life was primarily gloomy. His novels and poems are charged with deep notes of pathos. A.C. Ward (1964:153) comments:

The tragedies that fall upon them are often due, in Hardy's interpretation, to the intrusion of modern customs and new habits of mind.

Hardy's pessimistic writing style may well be the result of his own victimization. First of all, he had ill-health and his serious temper gave him a propensity to make his characters either victims or victimizers. Secondly, Hardy's outlook of life was primarily gloomy and somber. According to him, man is caught in a perpetual net of suffering and nothing can liberate him. Tim Horton (2009: 441) comments:

Hardy took comfort in the realization that probability of character is far more important than probability of incident. This accords with Hardy's last definition of tragedy: The best tragedy – highest tragedy, in short is that of the worthy encompassed by the inevitable.

Other factors which affected Hardy's negative outlook of life are social conventions, sex, and unrequited love. As Tim Horton (2009: 442) observed that:

Tragedy for Hardy is the defeat of the romantic hero's desire to reach a higher spiritual state.

Furthermore, Thomas Hardy has concentrated on the element of the past in most of his writing which contributed much in victimizing his characters. Ismail Salami (1999: 299) comments:

Instead, he wanted to show that important elements of human life are timeless. He once said that what is essential in life is that which is repeated. By linking the past and the present in his novels, he hoped to demonstrate those aspects of human morality that are repeated in generation after generation.

In Thomas Hardy's world suffering is endless. He was a pessimistic novelist because he saw life as somber, and his whole outlook of human life and man was negative. However, Hardy's novels mainly deal with tragic events as his characters fall victims to the typhoons of misfortune. His novels describe the complexities of human nature and pose questions about human life. The underlining theme of most of his novels is the struggle of man against the natural forces which rule the world. Hence, Hardy's novels are full of frustration and gloom and they reflect the spiritual unrest of his age. His novels are also full of sorrow and pathos. B.R. Mullik (1957:3) says:

There was plenty of tragedy in life of the Wessex labourer, with its poverty and its passion. Life to them was life in the raw. Dependent and ignorant, exposed alike to the oppressions of the social system and the caprice of the weather, at every moment of their existence the people among whom Hardy was brought up were made conscious of men's helplessness in the face of circumstances, Hardy, too, was the man to realize the tragedy implicit in such a life.

Thomas Hardy's point of view is different from other thinkers of the Victorian era and this view point of his pessimism resulted in victimization of his characters. First, he thinks that as God is not there in heaven, everything is wrong on the earth. Ismail Salami (1999: 300) states:

Like many Victorian writers, Hardy was troubled by a dwindling of his religious faith. He had carefully read the writings of Charles Darwin and other scientists and had lost some of his belief that a controlling force governed the universe.

Secondly, Hardy's attitude towards the social conventions has played a significant role in shaping the downfall of his characters. This is because the majority of his works deals with the unhappy relationships and several of them end with the divorce. Henchard and Jude are two good examples who fall victims to the conventional rules of marriage. B.R. Mullik (1957:3) observes:

The world he [Thomas Hardy] looked seemed so full of pain and disappointment, then, he argued, pain and disappointment were outstanding characteristics of human existence.

Finally, the feminist element was also one of the causes of victimization in Hardy's novels. For example, Sue, Lucetta, Arabella, Bathsheba, and Susan serve as examples of victimizers and victimization. U.S. Mathur (1968: 149) observed:

One very significant point in Hardy's attitude to women is the cynical tone of many remarks about them. The most serious deficiency that is glaring is the inability of the women to judge male character. This seems pathological weakness.

2.6 Conclusion

The foregoing discussions in this chapter reveal that life of the Victorians has gone through various difficulties as exemplified in the industrial revolution, the scientific progress, rapid inventions and several unsettling social developments which transformed the life of the people and influenced their conventional outlook of life. This revolution has further victimized many countries in the world like Australia, India, Canada, South Africa, Rhodesia, Hong Kong, and several islands in the West Indies as well as colonies on the African Coast because they were under the control of the British Empire.

This chapter is divided into four main sections with an introduction which reveals how literature and writers have been affected negatively during the industrial revolution in England. The second section shows how the life of the Victorians have been victimized socially, politically, culturally, economically, morally, psychologically, and sexually. Furthermore, the third section of this chapter explains the word 'victim' from psychological, political, social, cultural, religious, moral, and sexual angles. The fourth section discusses the victim – victimizer relationship in the Victorian novels. In this section, an attempt has been made to briefly scrutinize the concept of the victim-victimizer calculated by various novelists in the Victorian fiction such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot. These novelists have shown different causes which make their characters either victims or victimizers and these causes are society, wealth, politics, and economy. The fifth section reveals Thomas Hardy's perception of the victim – victimizer relationship.

Chapter III

Society as Victimizer

3.1 Preliminaries

The present study focuses on identifying, describing, classifying and analyzing the factors that victimize the people / characters in Thomas Hardy's selected novels. There are many forces which victimize people. The researcher has short-listed three such significant factors. They are society, individuals (human agents) and nature. The present chapter deals with the role of society in victimizing its own people through outworn laws, values and beliefs. The next two chapters are about the role of individuals against other individuals and the role of nature in adversely affecting human beings. Many critics comment on the role of fate or destiny in victimizing the characters of Thomas Hardy. However, the present study does not focus on this factor as an independent force as destiny works through society, people and nature mainly. Moreover, many critics have extensively dealt with destiny in Thomas Hardy.

Individuals form a society which exists to cater to the rational basic needs and rights of these individuals. In some societies, the individuals are given more importance and their rights and freedom become the focal points. These are liberal and open societies which allow the individuals to thrive freely.

On the other hand, some societies consider the ‘society’ more important than the individual members of such societies. These are closed and oppressive societies in which the individuals feel smothered. There should be an optimum balance between these two extreme view points and both the society and the individuals should get equal importance.

A human society has many aspects of its own. It allows the individual members grow and live peaceful lives. At the same time, it controls and curtails their rights and freedom so that all members of the society get equal rights and freedom. So, there are many social rules. These rules change from time to time and some rules are sometimes not conducive to some sections of the society. There exist many social institutions to regulate the society. Family and marriage are two main social institutions which directly control the members of the society. There are moral, cultural and religious rules for the functioning of these institutions. If these rules do not change as per the need of the time, they become rigid, oppressive and harmful to the society and its members. This is the main reason of the conflict between the society and its members. Old, orthodox and oppressive rules harm the interests of the society and individuals. They victimize the members of the society. For example, male – dominated society cannot protect the rights of the female members. They are, on the other hand, unjust towards them. Sometimes, women are not even considered human beings and receive worse treatment than animals at the hands of men. *Tess* is a glaring example to prove this point.

Society develops its own power structure as the resources and privileges of / in the society are enjoyed and controlled by a selected few. A male member enjoys a very important and powerful position in family and society in male dominated society. He is the head of the family; he takes the important decisions in the family affairs. There are people who control economic means, cultural beliefs and values, religious dogmas, moral values and conduct, etc. They become powerful and play very effective roles in shaping / darkening the future of the society. All these factors have been duly reflected in the conflicts of Thomas Hardy's selected novels. Equitable distribution of economic resources, cultural tolerance, rationalization of cultural beliefs and values, human orientation of religious and moral rules and equal rights and freedom to all the members of the society are the effective solutions to these conflicts so that no member of the society becomes a victim and no society becomes victimizer.

The Victorian society was characterized by disparity / inequitable allocation of means and rights among the people which belong to different classes. This disparity has cultural, social, economical, political, and psychological reasons. These elements have the potential to turn the people in to victims and victimizers. These elements exist universally in human society. These elements can be defined as a dynamic tool to rule over the lives of the characters in Thomas Hardy's novels namely, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

The conflict between the victims and victimizers is the struggle between good and evil in Thomas Hardy's tragic novels which is almost similar to the struggle between good and evil in Shakespeare's great tragedies. The victims are good and innocent people who win the sympathy of the readers and suffer at the hands of the villainous victimizers.

3.2 Society as Victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Natural forces and human society seem bent on crushing the sensitive and imaginative nature of the individuals and ruin their lives in Thomas Hardy's novels. Society exposes its gratuitous suffering on individuals by applying formless conventions and shallow values. The most dominant role of society in victimizing its people is through economic circumstances. Economic forces are so strong that they can make or mar lives and future of people, their character and families. Man and his actions are determined and controlled by his economic surroundings. Poverty and unemployment are the terrible ills faced by individuals. It is the responsibility of the society to cater to the basic needs of the individuals. When people are deprived of their basic needs and the means to fulfill them, they go crazy and irresponsible and at times immoral because morality on empty stomachs is useless. Michael Henchard is a classic example in this regard. He has ability and will to work hard but he has no work so that he can not feed his family properly.

Poverty defeats him and destroys him and his family. He and his family are totally devastated by it. He is victimized by economic conditions he lives in. He searches for work from place to place and gets very little out of hay trussing. He cannot keep his family happy. Economic worries drive him mad and he becomes irresponsible. He drinks a lot and in a frenzy of drunkenness he commits a blunder of selling his wife, Susan, along with his little daughter, Elizabeth – Jane. He cannot look after them because of his dire poverty. He cannot keep himself morally upright and preserve the sanctity of his marriage. He considers his wife as a great (economic) burden. He wants to get relief from her, but had he been rich he would not have sold her even in his fit of drunkenness. His drunkenness is not the only sufficient and necessary reason behind his irresponsible act of disposing off of his wife and child. Henchard fails as a man, as a husband and as a member of his society because of his poverty and unemployment. Of course, in no way can his heinous act of auctioning his wife can be justified.

It is very much true that all poverty-stricken husbands do not sell their wives or don't sell them exactly like him, but Victorian literature, particularly Charles Dickens's novels, has many instances of poor women selling themselves for the sake of money solely because of their poverty. Unequal distribution of wealth and unequal job opportunities give rise to poverty and it demoralizes men, their character and families and ultimately the society. This is very effectively reflected in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

Later, the same man, Henchard, works hard and becomes wealthy and regains his lost family. Susan comes back to him. So, wealth can do wonders.

By selling his wife to a sailor, Henchard goes against the social norms. It is the duty of the husband to look after his wife and children and protect them from disasters. He does not perform the role of a husband very well. It is not expected of him to sell his wife. He does not observe his moral obligation towards his wife and violates the moral law of the society. His wife is auctioned by him and that is a crime. This is how he offers his wife for sale:

Here- I am waiting to know about this offer of mine. The woman is no good to me. Who will have her?

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 8)

Family is a basic unit after individual in society. Henchard is the head of his family. He has to shoulder the responsibility of the well-being of his family. Love should be the base of the bond between the husband and wife. Marriage between him and Susan should last till the death of either of them. The husband should provide food, clothing, shelter and security to his family, while the wife looks after the children and keeps herself busy with household chores. Henchard deviates from the norm of the society by selling his wife. At the time of the wedding he has accepted her as his lawful wife and he should not part from her by selling her. Susan is a living human being; she is not a thing to be traded.

He goes against the rules of the marriage governing the agrarian society of his time. When Henchard comes to know that a sailor is ready to buy his wife, he doubts his purchasing power by saying:

Saying is one thing, and paying is another. Where
is the money?

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 10.)

Susan is not ready to accept her sale but she is helpless. She is forced to leave her husband. Moreover, Henchard has not been a loving and kind husband to her as she declares:

Mike, she said, I've lived with thee a couple of
years, and had nothing but temper! Now I 'm no
more to ee; I'll try my luck elsewhere. T' will be
better for me and Elizabeth-Jane, both. So good-
bye!

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 11).

The next day after Susan's auction, Henchard comes back to his senses. He feels ashamed of himself and his sinful act. His remorse takes him to a church where he swears that for the next twenty one years he will not consume strong alcohol. Then he moves out to search for Susan and his daughter. Unfortunately, he does not find them and he learns that they have left for another country. He is totally broken. Remorsefully, Michael Henchard takes the following oath:

I, Michael Henchard, on this morning of the sixteenth of September, do take an oath before God here in this solemn place that I will avoid all strong liquors for the space of twenty-one years to come, being a year for every year that I have lived. And this I swear upon the book before me; and may I be stroke dumb, blind, and helpless, if I break this my oath.

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 17)

After that he is a completely transformed person. He works very hard and becomes a successful trader and finally the Mayor of a town called Casterbridge.

Susan comes back to Casterbridge searching for Henchard after eighteen years. She thinks that her husband, Richard Newson, has died. She is helpless and she has Elizabeth-Jane with her. Her daughter does not know that Henchard is her step-father. Susan has not shared with her the secret of her auction by Henchard. The daughter thinks that Henchard is a relative to her mother. Susan wants the support of Henchard for her daughter. Henchard hides the secret of her sale as a close-guarded secret and to get the sanction of the society he remarries Susan. He does this mainly because he wants his daughter back to him.

People of Casterbridge wonder why their Mayor should marry a helpless low-class woman like Susan. He is victimized by the doubt in the minds of the people and this doubt is based on their views about the lower and the higher social classes and the values they attach to these classes. In this way, the class structure of the society cause him discomfort and suffering. Later, Henchard also falls prey to this kind of class consciousness when he advises Elizabeth –Jane not to behave beneath her social class, even though he and his family once have belonged to, at one time, a part of the lower class. It is for this reason the townspeople in Casterbridge do not even like Michael Henchard anymore. Therefore, they choose Farfrae over Henchard for the city council. As a result, Henchard and his stepdaughter become victims of the class consciousness.

Michael Henchard becomes a victim because he suffers dreadful consequences for failing to accept the social standards by selling his wife Susan and his daughter Elizabeth-Jane. He does not comprehend his actions at time of the auction and he cannot control himself.

Susan is the next victim of the social circumstances. She is a very poor and weak person. She is totally dependent on her husband whether it is Henchard or Newson. The Victorian society has assigned the role of a wife to her. As a dependent wife, she follows her husband like his shadow and suffers at his hand as per his mood. Lack of economic independence and subordinate cultural and social position makes her a submissive character.

Her whole existence depends on her husband. Even if he sells her, she has to accept it as no one listens to her. She is treated like an object and not as a person by Henchard. She does not like to be sold and she opposes the auction. She has to accept Newson because she has to rely on someone for her and her daughter's existence. Moreover, there is no hope that reckless Henchard will ever care for her.

Susan is once more thrown to the winds when she comes to know that her second husband is no more. She is compelled to seek Henchard's support for the sake of her daughter if not for herself. A poor and helpless creature like her is forced to return to Henchard.

Henchard prospers and serves as Mayor in Casterbridge. He remembers his family and regrets that day at the fair. At the same time, Susan tells Elizabeth-Jane of her relation to Henchard. As a result of Elizabeth-Jane's curiosities, the two women decide to go and see him. At the meeting, Henchard is relieved and the two women come to live with him. Thereafter, the family is reunited, but not according to the rules of society. It is because:

One of the two who walked the road was she who had figured as the young wife of Henchard on the previous occasion; now her face had lost much of rotundity; her skin had undergone a textural change; and though her hair had not lost color it was considerably thinner than heretofore. She was dressed in the mourning clothes of a widow. Her

companion, also in black, appeared as a well-formed young woman about eighteen, completely possessed of that ephemeral precious essence youth, which is itself beauty, irrespective of complexion or contour.

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 19)

Henchard hides the fact that he has sold his wife from the people of Casterbridge. Susan has also kept it a secret from her daughter. Henchard wants to save himself from the wrath of the society and he also wants to protect his position as a Mayor. If the people of Casterbridge know about his misdeed, he will be deprived of his Mayorship and will also be dishonoured. Susan has another reason for keeping the secret to herself. She wants her daughter to be well-received by Henchard and for that Elizabeth-Jane should respect him as a gentleman so that there should be no tension between the two. So, Susan and Henchard decide to show the public that they love each other and after that they get married, in fact remarried. To keep from being insulted through social abuse, Susan and Elizabethan-Jane waited for an appropriate amount of time and kept themselves hidden in a cottage outside the town. Because of the reappearance of Henchard's family into his life, he neglects his business in the corn trade and enables his rival Donald Farfrae, to take control of Henchard's business in the area. As a result, Michael Henchard becomes a victim of the cut-throat competition between him and Farfrae.

The result of the rivalry between them becomes disastrous for Henchard. It affects Henchard's prosperity as a merchant and as Mayor in Casterbridge. The town council elects Donald Farfrae as mayor because of his energy and prospects. Henchard, on the other hand, could not remain a respectable member in society. He appears dishonest and demoralized to the society when the auction secret breaks out. Therefore, Michael Henchard's income decreases as a result of his disrespectful and demoralizing behavior. Henchard becomes totally helpless. He cannot control himself. He observes no moral laws. The view of Albert J. Guerard (1963: 102) expresses this explicitly:

Participating, like nature, in a universal moral organization, society is demoralized, as Henchard himself has been demoralized, by the outrage from which no atonement has been made.

Thereafter, Henchard's life takes a turn for the worst. His wife, Susan, dies, and he thinks that it is a good time to tell Elizabeth-Jane the truth that he is her real father and not Newson as she believes. After informing Elizabeth -Jane of this news, Henchard finds a letter from Susan. The letter ironically states that Elizabeth-Jane's real father was Richard Newson; Henchard's daughter had died at the age of three months.

Susan has named Newson's daughter Elizabeth-Jane so as to remember her previous daughter by Henchard. He does not disclose his earlier relation with Susan to Elizabeth-Jane because that would separate her from him. He fails to tell Elizabeth-Jane who is her true father. As a result, he becomes the main source of Elizabeth-Jane's tragedy. Thereafter, Henchard finds himself lonely, sad, unwanted, childless, unmarried, unloved, and poverty-stricken.

Henchard cannot control his emotions. At times, he becomes wild and foolish. He can neither regulate himself nor can he manipulate the world around him. David Daiches (1969: 1077) puts it precisely in the following way:

Henchard himself is almost a natural force, at the mercy of his instincts and emotions, lacking both in self-knowledge and objective understanding of the external world.

When Newson returns looking for his daughter, Henchard lies not only to Elizabeth-Jane, but also to Newson. He tells him that Elizabeth-Jane is dead. He tells lies in order to keep Newson away from him and keep Elizabeth-Jane with him. Thus, Henchard's lies drive him deeper and deeper into a pit of deception. Finally, he does not only become unacceptable as per social norms (for he is a liar), but he loses Elizabeth-Jane, too. Had Michael Henchard accepted and followed the social norms, he could have lived happy life. He gives away his happiness, his family, and his wealth.

Though he had many chances to confess his sin of selling his wife, he does not vent out the truth. Henchard, instead, hopes the problems will go away. As a result, he begins treating people strangely. Hence, he loses the respect of the people of the town. He is a bundle of good and evil. He struggles to control his life. Even when he sees his happiness fizzle out, he does not grab hold of it. He reverts to revenge, envy, and lies. As a result, he loses all that he had.

Lucetta has pure and passionate love for Henchard. Unfortunately, Susan's arrival makes him neglect her. As he marries Susan, Lucetta leaves Casterbridge. However, she returns to Casterbridge after Susan's death hoping that she might marry Henchard. She falls in love with Donald Farfrae as he is more promising, younger and uprising business man. Her past cast shadow on her life. She has loved Henchard and she has also written many love letters to him which he returns to her through Jopp. Unfortunately, Jopp makes the letters public. Immediately, people take out a skimity-ride of the effigies of Henchard and Lucetta. A scandal breaks out and she is so terribly shocked that she faints and dies. In this way she becomes a victim of social scandal for her pure and passionate love for her lover. Ordinary and sadistic people like Jopp spoil her life forever and drive her to her death. Jopp takes pleasure in hurting Lucetta and Henchard. He is a sadist who feels very happy and enjoys the scene at the skimity-ride. Therefore, it is obvious that he is one of the reasons behind the disrespect of Lucetta and Henchard in the eyes of the society.

Decay, damage, and corruption are symptoms of the end of life or death. The High-Place Hall has horrible features; its walls metaphorically indicate corruption. It represents the corrupted society and it lies exactly in the center of town. Henchard and his family have been affected negatively because they are natives of this place. In addition to this, most of the characters in the novel, such as Elizabeth-Jane and Michael Henchard, gather and meet in this hall. They continue to oppose each other. Henchard opposes Farfrae in order to discourage Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane from meeting in the same hall. Nevertheless, Elizabeth-Jane regards the High-Place Hall as a place where she can find love.

Finally, it is noteworthy to say that Thomas Hardy has colorfully presented his novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, from the point of view of the society. It is from this angle that his characters, Michael Henchard, Lucetta, Elizabeth-Jane, and Susan, suffer a lot and reach their doom.

3.3 Society as Victimizer in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Tess's father gets the information that he belongs to the great old d'Urberville family. Thereafter, Tess's life becomes complicated. Her father, Jack, arranges a party to celebrate this happy news, and gets drunk to the degree that he cannot control his horse carriage the next morning. Consequently, Tess is put in charge of the situation. As Tess is not expert in the horse carriage control, an accident takes place and the horse dies which was the only source of her family income. Tess becomes a murderer as per the beliefs of her ancestors because she is responsible for the death of the horse. She blames herself for this accident. She admits:

'Tis all my doing-all mine!" The girl cried, gazing at the spectacle. "No excuse for me - none. What will mother and father live on now? Aby, Aby!" She shook the child, who had slept soundly through the whole disaster. "We can't go on with our load-Prince is killed.

(*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, 29)

In this way, cultural beliefs, the traditions and ancient rules of the Victorian society are responsible for the ruin of Tess. She becomes a victim because her ancestors are not in her favour and she does not receive their blessings. They can be considered as one of the reasons of her tragic plight. Circumstances forced her to work and earn money for her family.

She is further forced to choose the family of the d'Urberville for her employment and work as a maid in the same family.

Tess is a pure woman by heart and behavior, still, she is morally unaccepted by her society as Alec seduces and rapes her. She becomes a sinner because of Alec's immoral action. Instead of blaming Alec, society blames Tess and tortures her as a sinner. These complications force her to kill Alec. One complication causes another complication. Though, Tess is good and innocent in her heart and behavior, she is held responsible for the death of the horse, Alec, and her child. All these complications create difficulties and sufferings in her life.

Tess of the d' Urbervilles moves around the idea of virginity of the heroine, Tess. Virginity is a highly desirable moral, cultural and religious quality or virtue of a young girl. A virgin girl or woman is considered pure, chaste, sacred, innocent, etc. A young girl is expected to be virgin by those who wish to marry her. Virginity indicates her physical status that she is uninitiated and hence morally virtuous and upright, socially and culturally acceptable and desirable, and religiously pure and innocent. Virginity is a very important measure of a woman; it is the test of her personality and life. It brings social recognition, cultural acceptance and religious chastity. Loss of virginity brings shame, moral ban, social abuse, cultural isolation and religious punishment to her. Tess loses her virginity because Alec rapes her. She has not lost her virginity willingly on her own. In fact, she is forced to lose it. It is not her fault but she has to suffer everything that is associated with the loss of it – moral, social, cultural and religious punishment and ban.

The man who rapes her goes unpunished because he is a man and he need not worry about his own virginity as male-dominated societies do not attach any punishment to man's loss of virginity and he is rich and powerful and Tess is poor and helpless; and society is controlled by those who are rich and powerful. Her life, her very existence and identity are totally devastated by the loss of her virginity. Society, culture, and religion do not and cannot punish Alec for his heinous act; on the other hand, Tess is considered a sinner. She punishes him for his sin; she kills him but she is not entitled to do so and that is why the police arrest her and 'the President of the Immortals' is finally happy that she is finished. Her plight has been properly expressed by U.S. Mathur (1968: 134) in the following words:

For a pure woman to be crushed into impurity-
there is a soul's tragedy.

The Victorian social rules were against those who indulged in a sexual act before getting married. It is of course a contradictory system which ruins people to their downfall. The people who follow these rules of morality don't know who is the real trouble maker. For example, Alec, who is a real sinner, is not accused as a victimizer. On the contrary, Tess, who is pure, becomes a victim as she defends herself against the social abuse. In fact, Tess should not be considered impure. Society blindly follows the rules of morality and innocent individuals like Tess are crushed down. In fact, the social rules which are responsible for Tess's suffering are to be blamed and not Tess. Thus, society victimizes her cruelly and inhumanly.

Wives working and supporting family were not traditionally and morally acceptable during the Victorian era. It is the responsibility of the husband to take care of his wife and to look after her. For example, Tess faces problems after getting married with Angel. When Angel Clare marries Tess, she honestly informs him about her seduction by Alec. Angel Clare becomes angry and leaves Tess confined in her impurity. Hence, the social rules which are related to the marriage institution are responsible for the downfall of the characters. Angel decides to abandon Tess after his marriage with her. He gives Tess some money to support her. Hence, the institution of marriage and poverty victimize her inhumanly. David Daiches' (1969: 1080) observations support this argument:

Angel Clare is a much worse character than Hardy seems to recognize.

Social circumstances create obstacles in the way of its people. For example, Angel Clare decides to leave Tess, even though he himself once trapped a woman and lived with her for forty-eight hours. As a result, Tess spends the winter time on a farm which is very far away from her home to save herself from the social abuses. Thereafter, Tess is forced by circumstances to return to Alec to claim his assistance as she is trapped in a critical situation after Angel's rejection. This shows how social circumstances prove to be harsh and cruel towards Tess. She herself was not willing to commit an immoral act, but she was helpless before her master. Her helplessness has been misused.

Social circumstances force her to listen to her master and become a victim and undergo suffering in her later life. Tess tries to seek Alec's help. Alec cleverly puts her in a shameful position and keeps himself secure and safe from the social abuses. He pretends to love her, takes advantage of her helplessness and seduces her again.

Thomas Hardy opposes rigid and unjust religious rules in most of his novels. He prefers pure and easy religious rules to the complicated ones. Angel Clare is Hardy's best example to represent the immorality of religion. He is the son of a clergyman who grows up in a fully religious atmosphere. He dreams to be a perfect religious man. So, he follows the strict rules of religion and philosophy. He utters:

I love church as one loves a parent. I shall always have the warmest affection for her. There is no institution for whose history I have a deeper admiration; but I cannot honestly be ordained her minister, as my brothers are, while she refuses to liberate her mind from an untenable redemptive theolatriy.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 118)

Angel Clare cannot convince of his love with Tess. He cannot find a clear justification for his gloom when he discovers Tess's secret with Alec. In other words, he suffers to adjust with the social rules and traditions of the society, especially when he discovers after his marriage with Tess that she is not virgin.

Therefore, he becomes a victim because of the wrong cultural and moral beliefs of his society. Finally, he leaves Tess and saves himself from the social abuses. The result is that he ruins Tess's life as he leaves her in the jaws of cruel social circumstances.

Alec d' Urbervilles becomes a preacher in the Low Church movement. He confesses before Tess that he is fully reformed and changed man and so he wants Tess to forgive him and return back to him. However, in fact, he still looks at Tess lustily. For example, when he sees Tess again, he immediately leaves the church to pursue her so that he can satisfy his sexual desires. This shows hypocrisy on Alec's part. He is a preacher in the Low Church movement and society judges men and women by applying the religious and social rules. Tess trusts Alec again because she has no option. As an innocent woman, Tess discloses her marriage with Angel Clare and the story of her child to Alec. In addition to this, she accepts Alec's request to marry her again. Alec ruins Tess's life by giving her wrong information. He convinces Tess that her first husband, Angel Clare, has left her forever, and she should forget him forever. He further tells her that even if Angel Clare returns back, she should not look upon him as her husband. Alec deplors both Tess and Angel when he tells her:

You have been the cause of my backsliding', he continued, stretching his arm towards her waist; 'you should be willing to share it, and leave that mule you call husband forever

Thus, Alec's deceitful act is one of the reasons behind Tess's downfall. Finally, Angel Clare comes back to claim Tess as his wife. She discovers the truth of Alec's deception and stabs him in the heart. Alec becomes a victim because of his hypocrisy. However, Tess's life comes to an end as a result of Alec's immoral and deceitful attitude towards her.

Geoffrey Harvey's (2003: 83) comments about Alec and Angel's attitudes towards Tess support the researcher's argument:

Both Alec and Angel regard her as an object of desire, and she becomes their victim, violated by Alec and later abandoned by her husband. Alec assumes her compliance, while Angel fits her into his Romantic preconceptions of nature.

The members of the churches are responsible to some extent for the ruin of the lives of the people in the Victorian era. For instance, Parson Tringham, one of the members of the churches, is one of the problem makers in Tess's life. He tells Jack, Tess's father, the news that his family belongs to the great grand ancestry of d' Urberville. Tess is sent to seek the help of the d'Uberville and she trapped by Alec. Tess becomes a victim as a result of her seduction by Alec. Parson Tringham, who represents the social standards of the society, causes Tess's downfall.

The following paragraph reveals the inhuman attitude of the religious authorities towards Tess:

The people who had turned their heads turned them again as the service proceeded; and at last observing her [Tess] they whispered to each other. She knew what their whispers were about, grew sick at heart, and felt that she could come to church no more.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 86)

Negative attitudes victimize people. Some preachers painted a damning of the biblical texts on the fence of one of the churches. This indicates the weak theology the people followed during this period. Such negative attitudes affect religious people by keeping them away from true religious activities. When Tess was pregnant, she wanted to visit the church. Soon, though, she feels heart sick and decides not to visit the church again because the parishioners look doubtfully and objectionably at her pregnancy. Tess suffers from social abuse even in the church, which is supposed to be the holy and secure place for her. This results in Tess becoming a victim because of society which is supposed to help her during her difficulties.

We can observe her feelings when she visits the church and overhears:

I can't split hairs on that burning query,' he said. 'I have walked hundreds of miles this past summer, painting these texts on every wall, gate, and stile in the length and breadth of this district. I leave their application to the hearts of the people who read 'em. 'I think they are horrible', said Tess. Crushing! Killing!

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 81)

Tess becomes a victim again because of the social rules of the Victorian era. When Tess returns home after the employment of Angel Clare, she discovers that the grave of her baby is covered by small trees and grass. She decides to clean the grave of her baby. Meanwhile, some of the so-called scrupulous people see Tess cleaning the grave. They accuse her for adultery as they remember her past sin with Alec. Tess and her family are evicted from their home as a result of Tess's sin, which is actually committed by Alec. Tess and her family members become victims as a result of the indiscriminating religious beliefs of the people of the time. It is obviously clear that the rigid and indiscriminating rules of the church are the causes in making the people victimize one another.

Thomas Hardy shows how the church deceives people by following and applying rigid and indiscriminating rules. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* mainly deals with the social problems of the Victorian era.

It teaches the readers a great lesson of perceiving the truth behind the hypocrisy of the rules of the churches which were followed by the people of the era. Thomas Hardy clearly shows the hypocrisy of the society in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* through his characters: Tess, Angel Clare, Alec, and others. Society is the main cause of the tragedy in the lives of the people like Tess and others.

Alec is responsible for the plight of Tess. Because of him, life in society for Tess becomes completely unbearable and humiliating. Alec becomes the greatest obstacle in Tess's life. He represents the high rank of hypocrisy as he belongs to the high class in the Victorian society. He also represents the cruelty of society because he shows no repentance or remorse for his seduction of Tess, though this type of mistake was considered to be a taboo in Victorian society. Tess's sin is caused by Alec's immoral actions. Tess and her family become Alec's victims and suffer from social criticism. She keeps her morals, her innocence, and beauty in spite of her seduction. Still, Tess may be indirectly blamed for Alec's sin since she was mature enough of her own identity as a woman. At the same time, Tess's mother should bear some of the blame since she doesn't teach / warn her of what the wicked men can do to women.

Alec is responsible for the death of Tess's child by him because he refuses to take care of Tess and the child. Tess asks the priest for his help to bury her baby according to the Christian rituals, but she is prohibited by the rigid social and religious rules. The priest discovers the truth of how the baby has come to be in this life.

The priest follows the rigid moral laws of the church. Consequently, he becomes one of the victimizers of Tess. Tess and her baby become victims due to Alec's cruel and immoral action of seducing her and the rigid and harsh social and religious traditions. The narrator of the novel states clearly:

Tess, who mused on the christening a good deal, wondered if it were doctrinally sufficient to secure a Christian burial for the child.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 98)

Tess gets a job of a milkmaid in a large farm in Flintcomb-Ash. There she meets Angel Clare and falls in love with him. Thereafter, Angel Clare declares his love to Tess. He asks her to marry him. Angel Clare proposes her by saying:

I wish to ask you something of a very practical nature, which I have been thinking of ever since that day last week in the meads. I shall soon want to marry, and, being a farmer, you see I shall require for my wife a woman who knows all about the management of farms. Will you be that woman, Tessy?

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 174)

Tess does not immediately want to marry Angel as she is aware of her seduction by Alec. She does not want to trouble Angel though she loves him truly and passionately. Moreover, his parents are against his marriage with her. She utters:

Your father is a parson, and your mother wouldn't like you to marry such as me. She will want you to marry a lady.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 175)

Angel and Tess soon decide to get married. Tess does not dare to share with Angel Clare her past incident with Alec; she fails to do so because she fears losing him. Harsh social rules ruin Tess's happiness again. Angel Clare discovers the truth of Tess's seduction and he abandons her because he feels that she has deceived him. At the same time, he tries to save himself from social abuse. As a religious man, he considers Tess's sin not only against man but also against God. It is the hypocrisy of men of the Victorian society which makes men to victimize women through their negative, dominating, and wicked attitude towards them.

Many critics find faults with Tess but the readers of the novel have great sympathy for her in spite of her faults and weaknesses. Martin Seymour Smith (1994: 439) observes:

Tess could indeed have avoided her fate. She could have told Angel of her lapse when she first felt impelled to do so. But that would have been calculating, and therefore a breaking of faith.

Men of the Victorian society considered women weaker. In fact, it was the duty of the society to take care of the women's rights. Women were treated negatively by considering them as having weakness in their sexual desires. This becomes clear through the behaviors of Alec and Angel towards Tess. Society victimizes Tess as she is the product of the society.

Angel Clare, who is an educated religious man from a high class family, is also a product of this society. He is aware of Tess's sin and society's impending criticism. He refuses to be with Tess since society will degrade him. Thus, Tess becomes a victim of Angel's rejection and the rigidity of the dominating male environment that existed during the Victorian society. Man's negative and sexual attitude towards women and the rigid, harsh social rules applied only to women.

Physically, Tess has been seduced and spoilt, but she is pure and innocent in her mind, heart and soul. Thomas Hardy describes her as a bird caught in a trap. This means that she has no immoral intentions that provoke Alec's seduction.

Male domination, man's sexual attitude towards women, and the rigidity and harshness of the social rules towards women victimize tender innocent and helpless individuals like Tess. Geoffrey Harvey's (2003: 83) comment in this regard is very informative. He believes:

Tess is not simply presented as a passive victim, However, throughout the novel she is shown as experiencing tension between the intractable materiality of the social and economic world in which she has to live, and her extraordinarily vulnerable, sensitive self.

Finally, Tess thinks to put an end to her suffering by wishing to die like a wounded pheasant. Once, Tess sees a wounded pheasant while she is travelling in the countryside. She cannot bear the suffering of the wounded pheasant left by the hunters, so she decides to snap their necks with her hands. Similarly, Tess wishes the same death when she is captured by the police as she has killed Alec. The narrator of the novel traces the origin of her sufferings by stating that:

Most of the misery had been generated by her conventional aspects, and not by her innate sensations.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 93)

3.4 Society as Victimizer in *Jude the Obscure*

Love, marriage, and poverty are the elements of society which victimize the characters in *Jude the Obscure*. These elements lead to the tragic and sorrowful life of Jude Fawley and others. For instance, the deception in love and marriage brings misery in the life of the protagonist of the novel, Jude Fawley. Jude and other characters - Sue Bridehead, Arabella Donn, and Richard Phillotson - become victims as a result of their rejection by society. Jude is inspired by the schoolmaster, Richard Phillotson, to study at Christminster because he has been told that Christminster is an enlightened place for his learning; he must go to Christminster because his aims will be fulfilled there. B.R. Mullick's (1957: 22) observations in this context are meaningful:

Jude as originally conceived, is actuated by the desire for knowledge as well as the desire for happy love. But before a third of the book is over, the desire for knowledge is forgotten and love becomes Jude's ruling motive, as it was Henchard's and Giles's and Gabriel's.

Richard Phillotson victimizes Jude as he does not keep his word by taking him to Christminster. Jude Fawley is disappointed because he is left alone by Richard Phillotson in Marygreen. In other words, Jude becomes a victim as he has been cheated by Richard Phillotson who is one of the members in the Victorian society.

Richard Phillotson proves to be a careless teacher as he does not help Jude Fawley go to Christminster. He follows his ambition only to be a well respected man in the eyes of the Victorian society. His deceptive behavior towards Jude causes many problems in Jude's life. The following paragraph illustrates Richard Phillotson's promise to Jude Fawley:

I shan't forget you, Jude,' he said, smiling, as the cart moved off. Be a good boy, remember; and be kind to the animals and birds, and read all you can. And if ever you come to Christminster remember you hunt me out for old acquaintance' sake.

(Jude the Obscure, 9)

The institution of marriage in the Victorian society ruins the life of Jude Fawley. Jude Fawley meets Arabella Donn and falls in love with her when he was nineteen years old. Arabella Donn's tricks are the main cause behind Jude's tragedy when she traps Jude into marriage by telling him the lie that she is pregnant by him. Arabella Donn, whose father is a pig-farmer, makes Jude Fawley a victim. Arabella Donn and her father follow the old rigid rules of the Victorian society and deceive Jude. She proves to be a villainous character in this novel as she uses Jude Fawley's innocence for her sexual desires. Geoffrey Harvey's (2003:92) observations in this context become supportive:

In the 1912 Postscript to the original Preface, Hardy said he thought that the cruelty of marriage and to one of the parties rendered it essentially and morally no marriage, and that this secured a good foundation for a tragedy. *Jude the Obscure* is an angry novel in which marriage is treated bitterly as tragic farce.

Another thing which makes Jude Falwley a victim is Arabella Donn's marriage to Dr. Vilbert in Australia. Dr. Vilbert indirectly causes Jude's tragedy. He marries Arabella Donn though he knows that she is formally engaged to Jude Fawley. Thereafter, Jude Fawley's marriage to Arabella Donn makes his life miserable and his future relationships with her become impossible. This is because of her deceptive behavior, personality, and traits. Finally, they leave each other as a result of her deception. Arabella Donn is blunt and rude in her attitude. She marries Dr. Vilbert thinking that she will enjoy more liberty. She is shameless enough to tell this to Jude. The following paragraph clearly explains her mindset:

Don't think that, Jude, for a moment, even though you may have said it to sting me! He's as good to me as a man can be, and gives me perfect liberty- which elderly husbands don't do in general ...If you think I am not happy because he's too old for me , you are wrong.

Still another thing which makes Jude Fawley a victim is Arabella Donn's action of attempting to commit suicide. Her strange behavior and dark thoughts make her think to commit suicide in order to be separated from Jude. The marriage between Jude Fawley and Arabella Donn is one of the reasons behind their tragedy. Jude Fawley becomes hopeless, lonely, and sad. This tragic situation pushes him backward in his studies at Christminster.

Jude Fawley is intelligent, clever, and hard working. He studies Greek and Latin by himself as he has no teacher. He decides to go to Christminster as he has been left lonely by Richard Phillotson. Once, when he was in Christminster, he visited Sue's house in Lumsdon. He becomes a drunkard due to his schoolmaster's deception. He becomes frustrated, lonely and disappointed because he cannot fulfill his aim. Jude's failure in intellectual achievement makes things more tragic. Jude Fawley confesses to Sue:

O, I am-I couldn't help coming, Sue! said he, sinking down upon the doorstep.' I am so wicked, Sue-my heart is nearly broken, and I could not bear my life as it was! So I have been drinking, and blaspheming, or next door to it, and saying holy things in disreputable quarters-repeating in idle bravado words which ought never to be uttered but reverently! O, do anything with me,

Sue-kill me- I don't care! Only don't hate and despise like all the rest of the world.

(Jude the Obscure, 151)

In Christminster, Jude Fawley meets his beautiful cousin Sue Bridehead. Soon, Jude Fawley falls in love with her. She is interested in studying at Christminster under the guidance of Richard Phillotson. In reference to Sue's meeting with Richard, the narrator states:

It was a part of his duty to give her private lessons in the evening, and some article in the Code made it necessary that a respectable, elderly woman should be present at these lessons when the teacher and taught were of different sexes.

(Jude the Obscure, 130)

Jude himself falls in love with Sue, so he is shocked when he finds out that Phillotson is interested in her. Jude cannot propose and marry Sue Bridehead as he is legally married to Arabella. Sue Bridehead possesses a very contradictory nature. She lives with her cousin, Jude Fawley, without marrying him. She has married her teacher, Richard Phillotson, but she has not physically surrendered to him. Geoffrey Harvey's (2003:90) comments support this interpretation:

Sue possesses a deeply contradictory personality. A determined individualist who fears marriage as a degrading form of social prostitution, she is deeply narcissistic and neurotically insecure, which results in a farcical vacillation.

Jude Fawley goes to Shaston to become a priest and when he gets there, he meets Sue. The lovers exchange nice and long kissing. Jude feels happy as he is separated from his wife emotionally. This makes Sue tell Richard Phillotson to live away from her. These circumstances disturb Sue greatly. She feels that things in general are horrible. She asserts:

No-I don't know! The universe, I suppose-things in general, because they are so horrid and cruel!

(Jude the Obscure, 274)

Sue Bridehead victimizes Jude by giving birth to his children and then later refusing to marry him because of her unconventional traits. She thinks that to be permanently with Jude Fawley means to end her freedom. According to her, the relations between men and women have limitations. She once spends one night with her cousin to avoid her husband. Richard Phillotson is also victimized because of Sue Bridehead's immoral and irresponsible behavior which is often reflected in the Victorian society. In this regard David Daiches (1969: 1080) rightly says:

Sue herself is a curiously frigid person; she marries a middle-aged schoolmaster, is carried off by Jude with whom she lives for years, takes charge of Arabella's little boy and produces children of her own.

Richard Phillotson proves to be an honest husband as he tries very hard to keep his relation with Sue Bridehead as his formal wife. He is older than Jude and so, Sue decides not to have any physical relationship with her legal husband. He becomes sad, lonely, and further victimized as he eventually permits his wife to leave him and live with her cousin without marriage. Richard Phillotson makes this utterance in complete frustrations:

You may go-with whom you will. I absolutely and unconditionally agree.

(Jude the Obscure, 288)

Sue Bridehead accepts Richard Phillotson as a friend and not as a husband. She does not love him as a husband. He is unsuccessful husband and so, he is looked down by the society. His marital mis/understanding brings him in more difficulties. He cannot keep and control his wife. His weak personality is to be main reason for Sue's disobedience. Of course, Sue's hunger for love and liberty is the prime cause of the unsuccessful marriage. Eventually, Phillotson and Sue are separated for the sake of Sue's cousin. Their aim to be a husband and wife remains unfulfilled. Sue Bridehead herself expresses her views in this regards:

Perhaps you have seen what it is I want to say? - that though I like Mr. Phillotson as a friend, I don't like him - it is a torture to me to - live with him as a husband! - There, now I have let it out - I couldn't help it, although I have been-pretending I am happy.

(Jude the Obscure, 263)

Like Jude Fawley, Richard Phillotson also fails in his aim to be a learned and enlightened man. He is one of the major and important characters in *Jude the Obscure*. He is ambitious, kind-hearted, and has orthodox views like Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead. He becomes a victim when his ambition to become a schoolmaster in Christminster remains unfulfilled, mainly because of Sue Bridehead's strange behavior towards him. His marriage with Sue Bridehead proves to be a failure as she refuses to be in physical contact with him. She, later on, divorces him and sleeps illegally with her lover, *Jude Fawley*. He utterly fails as a teacher and a husband. He loses his job as a school teacher. All these things happen due to his unconventional steps of allowing his wife to visit her lover, *Jude Fawley*. He becomes poor and falls sick. He is partially responsible for his own downfall as he breaks the social, moral and religious rules of the Victorian society and allows his wife to be a mistress of Jude.

The failed marriage between Jude Fawley and Arabella Donn brings a disaster in Jude Fawley's family. Jude Fawley unwillingly becomes Arabella Donn's husband. She informs him that she has a son from him. She is carefree and neglects Jude. He feels dejected and frustrated. He tries to commit suicide by drowning himself in the river.

Little Father Time, Arabella Donn's son by Jude Fawley, lives in Australia for few years with her parents. It is Jude Fawley's duty to take care of his son since Arabella Donn's parents can't look after him anymore. However, this news makes Sue Bridehead divorce Jude, although they are not married formally. Sue Bridehead has two children by Jude Fawley before they return back to Christminster. Jude Fawley gets in trouble because he cannot sustain his growing family. He becomes a victim because of loose, unconventional, strange and whimsical behavior of Sue and Arabella.

Jude Fawley is responsible to some extent for the failure of the marriage between Sue Bridehead and Richard Phillotson. It is Jude Fawley who introduces Sue Bridehead to Richard Phillotson. This leads Sue Bridehead to become a pupil-teacher in Richard Phillotson's school. She further becomes Richard Phillotson's assistant. Richard Phillotson falls in love with Sue Bridehead and finally marries her. This causes misery in Jude's life. She later leaves her husband for the sake of Jude Fawley. Consequently, Phillotson becomes sad, lonely, and frustrated. Jude Fawley tells Sue Bridehead:

I do love you, Sue, though I have danced attendance on you so long for such poor returns! All that's best and noblest in me loves you, and your freedom from everything that's gross has elevated me, and enabled me to do what I should never have dreamt myself capable of, or any man, a year or two ago.

(Jude the Obscure, 326)

This incident reveals the hypocrisy of men towards women in the Victorian society. It also shows Sue Bridehead's deception in love with Jude Fawley. Finally, Jude Fawley loses his job and returns to Marygreen and starts drinking alcohol because of his loneliness.

The poverty in Jude's life brings another disaster in his family. His financial situation crumbles down as the number of his children increases. He could not find lodging for his children. With great difficulty, he got lodging with the help of an old woman. He is in trouble again as she discovers that the children are more than two. Therefore, she sends the children away as they are more in numbers. Jude's children are victimized because of the hard circumstances they face. His poverty is caused by members of the society like Sue and Arabella as well as the old woman. Sue, Arabella, and the old woman are responsible for his miserable life. Such kind of behavior was commonly reflected by the people in the Victorian society. W.R. Goodman's (2008:435) observations help to understand the situation:

Jude's business began to decline, and he lost a contract to restore a rural church when they discovered that he and Sue were unmarried. Forced to move on, they travelled from place to place and from job to job.

Society brings another disaster in Jude Fawley's life. He is victimized when his cousin, Sue Bridehead, informs Little Father Time, who is the elder son of Jude Fawley by Arabella Donn, that they are forced to leave the next morning because they have a large family with so many children. Sue Bridehead tells the children:

Tis because of us children, too, isn't it, that you can't get a lodging?

(Jude the Obscure, 410)

Little Father Time thinks about the gloomy information given by Sue Bridehead. Therefore, he plans to reduce the number of his family members by killing his younger step brothers. He hangs them and then hangs himself. David Daiches (1969: 1080) summarizes:

The son of Arabella and Jude, 'little Father Time,' old and wrinkled even as a small boy, eventually hangs his stepbrother and stepsister as well as himself, leaving an announcement: "Done because we are too menny.

Sue Bridehead, who represents the emerging new social behavior in the Victorian society, is one of the main reasons behind the tragedy of Jude Fawley. She has to be blamed for the death of her children, because of her licentious and illicit relations are against the institutions of marriage and family.

Society appears to be the cause of destroying the happy lives of most of the characters in this novel. The love relationships between Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead, and Arabella Donn appear strange and impossible. This is because the rules of the churches in the Victorian society could not accept the idea of being in love without marriage and free, immoral and extramarital relationships. Arabella Donn's utterance explains the situation:

Jude, do you think that when you must have me
with you by law, we shall be so happy as we are
now?

(Jude the Obscure, 333)

People become victims of the rigid and controversial social standards related to the institution of marriage. Therefore, Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead, Arabella Donn as well as Richard Phillotson find their lives as unmarried couples much happier than when they put themselves in the golden prison of marriage.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter includes information, analysis, and interpretations of the element of society as victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The protagonists of these three novels suffer at the hands of the society. However, Tess is the only innocent and pure person of the three. She is not immoral. It is true that she commits the crime of murdering her seducer, but she still wins the sympathy of the readers. They don't consider her to be criminal. On the other hand, they think that she is right in murdering him. In contrast, Henchard can be never pardoned for selling his wife and telling lies on many occasions. So also, Jude can never be considered a good character because he is morally degenerated and he has illicit relations. These protagonists share one common trait. They make wrong decisions because of their fears. Henchard fears that if his secret of selling his wife is made public, he will lose his post of a Mayor and he will be condemned in the society. Further, he lies to Newson that his daughter has died for the fear of losing her. Tess does not dare to disclose the fact of her seduction to Angel for the fear of losing him. Jude fears to lose his family shelter because of his poverty. As a result of that he loses his children when his older son kills his step brothers and himself.

Chapter IV

People as Victimizers

4.1 Preliminaries

The focus of this chapter is to explore how people become victims of their own passions, dreams, attitudes, thoughts, etc. and how they are victimized by other people in the selected novels of Thomas Hardy. They are simultaneously victims of themselves as well as of other characters; the first thing is responsible for the internal conflict within them while the second aspect is responsible for their conflict with the external forces like society and the universe. Often, they are victimized by their own tragic flaws. These characters are full of frustration and they are broken. Moreover, they are controlled by mischance and capricious destiny. They are not always aware of the mysterious and spiteful power which determines and shapes their destiny, and as a result, they become victims. Hardy's novels convey a feeling of resentment against the unjust forces which victimize man. However, Hardy proposes no remedy to the onslaughts of destiny and suggests no way out from the clutches of its power as man is helpless before it. The business which he deals with is not a strum of social therapeutics. He seems to make his readers pause, consider, and pity at the plight of his characters. The infernal distress which rules the world is Hardy's major concern. In other words, he shows the ingenious machinery which is controlled by gods for reducing human possibilities to a minimum level.

Hardy agrees with the view expressed in Shakespeare as he quotes in the preface to his novel *Tess of d'Urbervilles*:

“As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods,

They kill us for their sport. (King Lear, Act 4,
Scene 1, 35-37)

This is also accentuated in B.R. Mullik's (1957: 5) following comment:

For those whom they think their enemies are as
much as themselves puppets in the hands of fate.

A series of chances and coincidences frequently is often detrimental to human happiness. Most of the characters in Hardy's novels namely are wretched and miserable. They are often in a state of continual damnation. This is because Hardy's conception of life is tragic. There is hardly any escape from man's conflict against destiny. Man is not able to subdue his own insubordinate nature and mysterious spiteful power of fate places snares in his path. Destiny, nature, supernatural powers, social customs and the personal flaws of the characters appear to operate together to turn them in to victims. As a result, the working of all these factors creates a sense of mystery in the lives of his characters.

4.2 Characters as Victimizers in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Character, society, nature, chance, fate, and coincidences are responsible for the tragic situation in Hardy's novels. All these factors turn the characters in to victims. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* sometimes character plays a far greater role than fate to bring the tragedy in the lives of the other characters. The protagonist of this novel is a representative of the nineteenth-century man. He is characterized by suffering, loneliness, jealousy, and despair. U.S. Mathur (1968: 133) says:

Characters in the novel are to function as the agents that pass through violent or serene events showing phases of life. They reveal themselves in the strain of the events that are connected by the novelist.

In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, though fate plays an important role in the story, however, Henchard plays a much greater role than fate in causing his tragedy. He is responsible for his own fate despite the workings of blind fate, the occurrences of chance, and the vagaries of a hostile natural environment. His greatest misdeed is his selling of his wife. If he had not sold his wife in a fit of drunkenness or if he had not over speculated in order to ruin Farfrae, the painful events in his life would not have occurred. His misfortunes often result from his own deeds and actions.

Hardy's characters suffer from the consequences of fate, which causes their downfall. Susan's death is the best example of this. Fate continues to treat her cruelly till the very end of her life. Nothing in her life has been as she wished it. Her life ends sadly. First, she loses hope when she loses her husband. Her second marriage proves to be unlawful in her eyes. Then, she fails to bring Farfrae and her dear Elizabeth-Jane together. As a result, she becomes a victim of fate and strange behavior of her husband. The main significant cause of her tragedy is her own husband than her destiny. She is a helpless woman who is treated badly by him and finally sold like a commodity for insignificant amount of five guineas.

Henchard is presented as a power-hungry demon who sells off his wife and daughter. He victimizes Susan by blaming her for being simple enough to believe that such a sale is lawful. However, he defines his relationships with females in terms of wealth, honor, paternity, and legal contract. In this regard, Geoffrey Harvey (2003:75) comments:

Hardy's focus is on the experience of loss and suffering, which humanizes Henchard and puts him in touch with the more feminine aspects of his personality.

Susan's death is, in fact, one of the sources of Henchard's downfall. The greatest blow he receives is her letter which he should not have read before the wedding of his daughter.

It is a great irony that as soon as he claims his daughter to be his daughter, he comes to know that she is not really his own daughter but of the sailor. Again, he is a victim of his own action of reading the letter before the marriage of his daughter.

Characters also become victims at the hands of the other characters in this novel. It is sometimes due to bad luck and sometimes because of bad decisions. For example, when Henchard is at the fair at Weydon Priors with Susan and baby Elizabeth-Jane, he hastily sells his wife for five guineas to a sailor merely because he has drunk too much alcohol. Consequently, his family becomes a victim because of his act. Thereafter, he realizes his mistake of losing Susan, but he is not the only one to be blamed. His poverty and the bar-maid play a great role in making him commit such a grave mistake. The bar-maid victimizes him by providing him with strong and heady alcohol and lets him lose his family by allowing him consume too much alcohol. Therefore, the bar-maid is equally responsible, in a way, for the sale of his wife at Weydon Priors. The next morning when he wakes up, he feels some kind of remorse and guilt for his actions. Therefore, he is not, to some degree, the sole cause of the victimization of his family. Albert J. Guerard (1963:96) comments:

Her would-be father [Michael Henchard], on the other hand, his morale destroyed by his crime, is victimized by mysterious and rebellious depressions which he can neither understand nor control.

Henchard then swears that he will not drink strong liquors for the next twenty one years. He does not abstain from alcohol for the whole life. Thus, there is an element of doubt as to whether he is entirely serious about his oath of not drinking alcohol, but later it is proved that he sticks up to his oath. This is due to his personality and his character. He is a short-tempered man with too much pride. This is also one of the reasons behind his own downfall. He is stern and stubborn. His secrecy is another thing that makes him a victim in the novel. For instance, eighteen years after the sale of his wife and daughter, he and Susan meet secretly because they want Elizabeth -Jane to believe that he marries her mother out of love and not because of their previous marriage with each other of which the daughter is totally ignorant. At the same time, he can keep himself safe from social scandal and keep on meeting his long-lost wife.

The past affects the life of the protagonist as well as other characters. Ghosts represent the gloomy past of Henchard; for example, the gladiator has been killed in a battle and the woman was strangled and burned. These past events work against him and his wife because they haunt them till their complete destruction. As a result, he fails in his battle to win over his pride and Susan is smothered by his tyranny.

When Henchard mixes business with personal relationship, he loses his position as mayor in Casterbridge. The drill is the best example to indicate his mind-set. Farfrae believes in progress and uses the latest technology by bringing the drill to the town of Casterbridge where as Henchard becomes poor as he follows the traditional ways in his

business. The bull metaphorically represents Henchard's arrogance and uncontrollable nature. He continually puts Elizabeth-Jane and Luccetta in dangerous situations that keep them in a state of fear. He is the bull who crows down those who depend on his love, sympathy and support.

Depression, loneliness, and fate lead Henchard to consider the option of suicide after his lie to Newson about Elizabeth-Jane's death. He goes to the Ten Hatches where the river runs deep and contemplates suicide. Therefore, he is the one who is to be blamed because he makes himself a victim of his own pessimism. However, Elizabeth-Jane feels sympathy for him when she discovers that he is suffering a lot, and she decides to stay with him and look after him. Geoffrey Harvey's (2003:72) observations support this point of view:

Throughout the novel Henchard blames fate for his declining fortune, but signally fails to recognize that it is his character that contains the seeds of its own destruction.

Henchard insists on having Elizabeth-Jane as his real daughter. This becomes obvious when he asks her about the color of her hair. He speaks to her to take his surname though he is not her real father but he thinks that he is her real father. He insists her to accept his surname though Susan was against it. He tells his daughter:

One word more, Elizabeth, he said. You will take my surname now –hey? Your mother was against it; but it will be much more pleasant to me.

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 129)

It is ironic that Henchard describes himself as Cain when he feels jealous of his rivals and suffers a lot at the hands of them, especially, Newson and Farfrae. Newson deprives him of his daughter and Farfrae takes away everything from him - his business, mayor hood, beloved and finally, daughter. Henchard makes his daughter a victim by keeping her away from her real father and at the same time, he refuses to keep her with him. He leaves her alone in the town and wants her not to meet and love Farfrae. She feels alienated, sad and confused. His strange action is the cause of her victimization.

Henchard proves to be cruel when he wishes to marry Lucetta while Susan is dying. This shows how he becomes sometimes responsible for his own downfall as well as for Susan's sorrows and sufferings. He gets engaged with Lucetta immediately after Susan's death. Thereafter, Lucetta moves to Casterbridge hoping that she can marry him. Both the lovers exchange love letters. In the meantime, Lucetta meets Farfrae. They immediately fall in love and get married. Consequently, Lucetta destroys the hope of Henchard's marriage with her after the death of his wife, Susan. In this way, Lucetta victimizes Henchard.

Lucetta requests Henchard to return the love letters she has sent to him. She fears that these letters will disclose her love affair with him and destroy her marriage with Farfrae. Meanwhile, the whole community comes to know about the relationship between Henchard and Lucetta. A scandal breaks out as the people of the town take out a skimmity-ride of the effigies of the lovers and condemn them. As a result, he becomes bankrupt and lonely. Lucetta, Farfrae, and society victimize Henchard as they are partially responsible for his downfall. In this regard, B.R. Mullik (1957: 23) says:

For Hardy to bring a character to life it must be of a temperament to feel passionately and profoundly; it must be aware of itself as a victim of human fate; otherwise, he cannot enter into it.

Joshua Jopp is entrusted with love letters by Henchard but he makes a public reading of the letters in presence of some townsfolk. It brings shame to Lucetta and Henchard. She is so shocked by the incident that she faints instantly and finally succumbs to death. Hardy does not seem to blame her for her fault. She is more to be pitied than blamed as B.R. Mullik rightly (1957:5) observes:

And indeed it is significant that Hardy-as a rule-emphasizes the fact that even those characters the world would call wicked are so much the creatures of circumstance that they are far more to be pitied than to be blamed.

The whole community learns about the relationship between Henchard and Lucetta through Joshua Jopp. Jopp hates Henchard because he fires him from the job of manager. He victimizes Jopp by firing him and giving his position to Farfrae. Consequently, Jopp takes revenge on the lovers. He behaves as a villain in the novel. He opens the package which Henchard has given him to deliver to Lucetta. Jopp's act of making their secret letters public causes disreputation in the lives of the lovers. Geoffrey Harvey (2003:72) rightly comments:

He [Michael Henchard] makes an enemy of his manager Jopp by his whimsical hiring of Farfrae; an enemy of Farfrae because of his jealousy; and of Jopp again whom he blames for his ignoring of the weather prophet.

At the end, Farfrae and Lucetta become husband and wife and live in Weatherbury. He is partially responsible in ruining her life because he does not believe Henchard's words about the condition of his wife. Before her death, Lucetta informs Farfrae about her past relationship with Henchard. Farfrae and Lucetta victimize each other. Fate ruins Lucetta. She suffers deeply when she is convinced to leave Farfrae and she knows that it is nearly impossible for her to recover.

Lucetta victimizes some other characters also. For example, instead of being cautious like her husband, she openly shows interest in the stranger Abel Whittle. In spite of her love with Frafrae, she flirts with Abel Whittle openly. She wants Abel Whittle and Elizabeth-Jane to come closer to each other. However, she keeps Abel Whittle for herself.

She speaks lies to attract him.

Henchard is very much proud and obstinate and his pride stands in his way when he tells Newson that Elizabeth-Jane is dead when she is very much alive there and then in order to selfishly keep her with him. He victimizes her because of his selfishness. However, until the end of the novel, he knows that she could find out that he is lying to her about her real father. This event makes her furious and sad as if life for her has come to an end. Ironically enough, soon after his claim for his daughter, he finds a letter of his wife informing him that Elizabeth is not his daughter but she is the daughter of the sailor. He should have obeyed the instruction on the letter which warns him not to open the letter till his daughter's wedding. Geoffrey Harvey (2003:72) observes:

A crucial instance is his feeling that he [Michael Henchard] is the subject of malevolent forces, when immediately after his confession to Elizabeth-Jane that he is her father, he opens a letter left for him by his dead wife.

Henchard shows and presents himself to be a man of character with so many good qualities. However, he is an extremely short-tempered man. For example, Abel Whittle is his employee. He constantly comes late for work. Once, Henchard punishes him by pulling him out of bed without his trousers. Henchard wakes him up forcibly and utters:

Out of bed, sir, and off to the granary, or you leave
my employment to-day! 'Tis to teach you a lesson.
March on; never mind your breeches!"

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 103).

In fact, Abel Whittle is very loyal to Henchard but Henchard's punishment to him spoils his relations with him. It is he who gives Elizabeth-Jane Henchard's will and finally he communicates to her the news of his death.

Farfrae is never against Henchard's prosperity. He even does not view Henchard as his rival. On the contrary, Henchard does everything to get the best of Farfrae, to make him a victim, in order to regain prosperity. For instance, he challenges Farfrae to a wrestling match and contemplates murdering the successful young man. In the end, Henchard's misdeeds and fate intervene and make him a victim. About the bitter relationship between the two men, Geoffrey Harvey (2003:73) rightly comments:

The rivalry between Henchard and Farfrae is intensified by its inclusion of sexual, economic and political components. Henchard is forced to cede to his rival his former lover, his business, and his position as mayor.

Elizabeth-Jane is another person who seems loyal to Henchard. However, he does not treat her properly. He immediately breaks off his relationship with Farfrae and does not allow the courtship between Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane to progress. His pride makes him victimize the two lovers when Farfrae becomes more popular and successful than himself.

Elizabeth-Jane is also a victim of the mistreatment of Henchard. He treats Farfrae much better than Elizabeth-Jane herself. This is because he learns too late that she is not his biological daughter. So, he becomes very cold towards her. He compels her to move out of his house and leave him isolated and lonely. His affection for his daughter is not constant or steady and that is why Merryn Williams (1976: 119) comments:

His problem [Michael Henchard] is that he craves for affection, but can only give it in bouts and spurts. When his wife has died he feels a passionate need for Elizabeth, only to turn against her when he knows that she is really the sailor's child.

Thereafter, Henchard realizes how much he loves and misses Elizabeth-Jane. It is fate which orchestrates when she discovers that he is not her real father. He tries to reconcile with her on her wedding day by giving her a gift of bird-cage. Then fate comes into action as she finds out the dead goldfinch in the cage and thinks that it is his way of repentance.

Fate affects Elizabeth-Jane and causes her downfall. It comes in the shape of a relationship between Farfrae and Lucetta. Lucetta adversely affects Elizabeth-Jane when she gets the idea of Elizabeth-Jane's affections towards Farfrae. Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae are better suited and they both understand scriptures. But Lucetta learns about their growing love affair.

Elizabeth-Jane is also a victim to Farfrae and Henchard, because the two men are caught in a love triangle with Lucetta. For instance, when Elizabeth-Jane is in the room in the High-Place Hall, Farfare completely ignores her. Instead, he gives all his attention to Lucetta. In this way, Elizabeth-Jane comes to know that he is in love with Lucetta. He marries Lucetta and abandons Elizabeth. His true love not Lucetta but Elizabeth. In a whim, he chooses to marry the elderly lady and forsake his true love. Hence, he is the second man, along with her father, who is responsible for her tragedy. Farfrae is responsible for the loss of her passionate and sincere love and Henchard is responsible for the loss of her devotion to her real father, Newson. It is because of Henchard's information that she starts believing in him as his real father when he is not.

Henchard comes to know about the fact of Elizabeth-Jane's real father. Susan did not want him to know it before the wedding of their daughter because she thought it to be in best interest of her daughter and husband. She, while she is alive, does not want him to discover the fact that Elizabeth-Jane is not his daughter.

Finally, if he had not insisted on making Elizabeth-Jane his daughter, he could have saved himself from becoming a victim.

Elizabeth-Jane has the position of a very positive, charming, young lady. However, she goes to the extent of committing suicide because of Henchard's strange behavior towards her. She tries very hard to respect him as her father but she does it with a heavy heart as she cannot think of anyone else as her father than Newson. He notices that she finds it very hard to accept him as her father; in fact he realizes that she fears him and perhaps hates him, so he assures her by these consoling words:

Don't cry –don't cry! said Michael Henchard, with vehement pathos, I cant bear it, I won't bear it. I am your father; why should you cry? Am I so dreadful, so hateful to 'ee?

(The Mayor of Casterbridge, 128)

Fate also appears in the shape of coincidence when Susan returns again to Henchard when he is about to marry Lucetta. He cannot marry Lucetta and live a happy life with her. Similarly, shortly after his revelation of his paternity to Elizabeth-Jane, he finds Susan's sealed letter. Susan's letter discloses that his daughter died soon after her auction and this living Elizabeth-Jane is Newson's daughter and not Henchard's. She has christened her by the same name so that Susan could remember her previous daughter. Thus, it is by coincidence that Elizabeth-Jane and Henchard become victims. Commenting on the role

of fate and coincidence in Henchard's life, W.R. Goodman (2008: 428) observes:

Henchard...is a pathetic figure, born with an unfortunate disposition but genuinely longing to do right, tortured by remorse when he does wrong, and always defeated by some unlucky stroke of fate.

Henchard becomes a victim again when he accepts Elizabeth-Jane as his real daughter and then fate makes Newson appear on the scene and claims Elizabeth-Jane as his daughter. Finally, Henchard's life has come to an end like the life of the goldfinch. The goldfinch dies of starvation, and similarly, he is starved of genuine love - love from his close relation. His starvation is a metaphor. It describes him as a victim because he is isolated from the world and Elizabeth-Jane. Therefore, he becomes lonely, sad, and dies because of losing Elizabeth-Jane's love as a daughter.

4.3 Characters as Victimizers in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Tess of the d'Urbervilles is one more pessimistic novel of Thomas Hardy. It shows the struggles and suffering of the protagonist of the novel. Tess faces many problems and struggles throughout her life with Alec and Angel Clare. Both the characters ruin her life by their deceitful behavior towards her. Alec, Angel, and her father are responsible for her tragedy. Commenting upon Tess's tragedy and Hardy's skill of its presentation, U.S. Mathur (1968: 134) writes:

We witness the magic touch of Hardy by which he subjects his characters to a stern testing of the soul. The great characters are the tragic ones-for example there is Tess-her tragedy is not that she is hanged-it lies in the sin, in the total confusion in her soul at Angels' treatment. She suffers when she is again in the control of Alec d'Urbervilles.

Parson Tringham is one of the minor characters in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. He informs Tess's father that his family belongs to the lineage representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles. It comes from Normandy with William the Conqueror. Parson Tringham opines:

I am Parson Tringham, the antiquary, of Stagfoot Lane. Don't you really know, Durbeyfield, that you are the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles, who derive their descent from Sir Pagan d'Urbervilles, that renowned knight who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, as appears by Battle Abbey Roll?

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 2)

Parson Tringham is partly responsible for her tragedy. He puts unnecessary ideas about the glorious geneology of the family in to the head of her poor father. Her father is drawn in to the cultural superiority complex by the parson's words. This feeling of superiority compels him to establish contact with the d' Urberville family (and these contacts later lead Tess to her tragedy). He throws a party to celebrate the happy news. Since he is heavily drunk, he cannot drive the horse carriage the next morning. He asks Tess to help him in this work. Indirectly, he makes her a victim by putting her in-charge of the horse carriage. The horse, which was the only source of her family income, dies in an accident. Tess thinks that she is responsible for the death of the horse and, as a result, she shoulders the responsibility of her father and her family and sacrifices herself for their sake.

Tess is forced to work as a maid in the d'Urberville family. In this family, she meets Alec, who is the eldest son of the d'Urberville family. Alec looks lustfully at her beautiful body. He thinks of a way to seduce her. Once, she is invited to a party far away from the d'Urberville house. She drinks too much alcohol and becomes imbalanced. After the party, a group of women quarrels with her. Alec gets an opportunity to assure her that he will take her to her home. Instead, he drives his horse the wrong way which is very far from the d'Urberville house and rapes her. Alec spoils her chastity. Alec ruins her as she loses her faith and chastity among her peers. She decides to leave d'Urberville family to save herself. She gives birth to her baby. It is obvious that she sacrifices her life, happiness, and youth for the sake of her family. Her purity is a purity of heart and not of body as her seduction occurs against her will. She proves to be an honest, chaste, and respectable woman though she has been raped by Alec.

As a religious man, Alec should not give up his preaching if he has firm conviction in religious principles. He rejects Christianity as easily as he rejects a style of clothing. This is because he is confused and has weaknesses and negative attitude toward his religious beliefs. His inconsistent attitude makes him give up his religious preaching. He does not follow the religious rules of the church. He deceives himself and the religious men in the church by deceiving Tess again. The Victorian religious rules of the churches adversely affect Alec's soul. He covers the tempted soul with a protective blanket of salvation until someone like Tess comes along and stirs the fires in his body back.

The religious conventions make Tess as well as Alec victims because they follow the Victorian traditions, beliefs and religious rules blindly.

Tess is very strong when she refuses to surrender to Alec's sexual advances and flirting at the beginning. He uses different ways to exploit her as a means to fulfill his sexual desire. He asks her to hold his waist by her arms to feel her warm body. She proves to be an honest and strong woman as she refuses to do so. He requests her by saying:

'Now then, put your arms round my waist again, as you did before, my Beauty.' 'Never' said Tess independently, holding on as well as she could without touching him.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 51)

Tess is very strong as she bears the death of her infant. Her infant dies because Alec refuses to take care of him and his mother. As soon as Alec discovers Tess's pregnancy, he decides to leave her and wants to show himself as a clean man by disowning any responsibility towards her. He also tries to keep himself safe. His negligence of Tess and their child makes him responsible for their victimization.

Tim Horton (2009: 438) appreciates Tess as an individual:

Of all of Hardy's women, surely it is Tess who has won the greatest respect for her strength of character and struggle to be treated as an individual.

Though, Tess is strong and stubborn to bear the slings of the destiny, she is marked by one contradictory quality and that is her simplicity and weakness in the midst of the cruel and inhuman world. She is not aware of the deceptive world around her. She is simple, naïve and innocent girl. Her sole focus is to support her family by working with the d'Urberville family. She sacrifices herself for the sake of her family. She thinks that she is responsible for the death of their horse. Alec d' Urbervilles takes advantage of her weakness as she knows nothing of the deceptive ways of the world. So, she falls prey to Alec's vile designs.

The following paragraph reveals Tess's reaction to the death of her horse and urgency of doing something for the family:

I don't know what to say!' answered the girl restlessly. 'It is for you to decide. I killed the old horse, and I suppose I ought to do something to get ye a new one. But-but- I don't quite like Mr. d'Urberville being there!

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 43)

Tess's seduction takes place due to her simplicity and weakness. When Alec rides his horse along with Tess after the party, she surrenders to his ardent manners. Her eyes are dazed by Alec for a while. She is not really willing to have any close relation with him because she hates him. In one way or another, her weakness is responsible for his initiation in victimizing Tess. Geoffrey Harvey (2003:86) comments:

Equally he makes it clear that Tess was dazzled by Alec, and for a while remained with him as his mistress.

Tess utters:

It's quite true. If I loved you still, I should not so loathe and hate myself for my weakness as I do now!... My eyes were dazed by you for little, and that was all.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 78)

Her life becomes completely sad. She requests the priest to help her to bury her baby according to the Christian rules. The priest refuses to help her because she has given birth to a baby without marrying anyone and that is a kind of a grave sin. Moreover, the priest considers that she is not descendent of a noble family. Tess and her baby become the priest's victims. Consequently, Tess suffers as she loses her baby. She also fails to prove the identity of her baby's father and the circumstances of giving birth to the child.

Tess is partially responsible for her own downfall. She prefers to ruin her own life simply because she wants to make other people happy, especially her family members. For example, when Angel Clare discovers her seduction by Alec, she decides to end her life rather than divorce Angel Clare because she wanted to protect him from the social abuse. She sacrifices herself for the sake of others. In fact, she should be considered a pure woman as she makes herself a victim to save others

lives. Tess utters:

I don't see how I can help being the cause of much misery to you all your life. The river is down there. I can put an end to myself in it. I am not afraid....I will leave something to show that I did it myself-on account of my shame. They will not blame you then.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 240)

Tess decides to work as a milkmaid in a large farm in Flintcomb-Ash, after leaving Alec's family. Soon, she meets Angel Clare and falls in love with him. Thereafter, the two lovers decide to get married. She writes a letter to Angel informing him of her rape by Alec and slips the letter under Angel's doorway. However, he does not notice any letter as it slips under the carpet which she finds there after her wedding with him. He never finds it. The next morning, he behaves normally. She is caught in a big trouble as she has hid her past sin from him and her marriage proves to be a failure. She becomes a victim of her own fate.

Geoffrey Harvey (2003:83) feels sympathy for the injustices done to Tess:

It is Angel's crude application to Tess of the hypocritical Victorian double standard of sexual morality that reengages Tess in a fresh cycle of suffering on the bleak upland farm at Flintcomb-Ash, leading to her re-encounter with Alec and to

his murder.

Tess's mistake of marrying Angel Clare is related to the jealousy of her roommates and her sexual weakness. At Talbothays, she works as a milkmaid with a group of women. Angel Clare tries to be very close to her. Her roommates are jealous of her relationship with Angel Clare. However, she also feels jealous, as she thinks that Angel loves her. She feels that she may have a bright future with him after marriage. Tess believes that Angel may marry a common working woman and not a woman of his social rank. Accordingly, they get married, but she is given up when he discovers her past sin. Tess's utterance expresses the situation:

I shall give a way- I shall say yes- I shall let myself
marry him-I cannot help it!" she jealously panted,
with her hot face to the pillow that night, on
hearing one of the other girls sigh his name in her
sleep. I can't bear to let anybody have him but me!
Yet it is a wrong to him, and may kill him when he
knows! O my heart-O-O-O!

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 183)

After their marriage, they go to Wellbridge for honeymoon. They vow to confess to share with each other their past love stories. Angel admits that he had an affair with a strange woman in London for a short while. Tess's heart breaks as she keeps the secret about her past with Alec. Thereafter, she decides to tell him about her seduction by Alec.

However, as Angel hears the story, he leaves Tess alone as he usually does things in haste and makes quick decisions. He is one more victimizer of her. He leaves her to her own fate. He should have accepted her as she is if he loves her truly. His behavior proves to be very cruel as he does not believe in her purity. It is obvious that his commitment to the institution of marriage isn't very strong because without hearing her explanation and justification, he decides to give her up. She begs him for forgiveness, but he flatly refuses it. She vows to do anything he desires, but her efforts prove futile. Angel Clare is not ready to pardon her for her sin. So, he helplessly tells her:

O Tess, forgiveness does not apply to the case!
You were one person; now you are another. My
God- how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque-
prestidigitation as that!

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 235)

Tess feels cut off from her lover Angel Clare and grieves when she returns to the d'Urberville family for a second time. She commits a great mistake by marrying him. She also does not inform John d'Urbervilles about her past with Alec. John d'Urbervilles family is ashamed of her behavior. Her hope of getting married to Angel Clare and achieving social status is ruined by her cruel fate. She is further rejected by Angel Clare as well as by Alec's parents.

It is extremely doubtful if Angel Clare will ever forgive Tess. His obstinate nature prevents him from accepting her with her fault and he stays with her only to avoid scandal. He tells her that they should be separated and he plans to go abroad. She becomes a victim because she trusts him and sacrifices herself for his sake and for his convenience. The following expression reveals Angel Clare's double standard and hypocrisy:

You know, I have to think of a course. It was imperative that we should stay together a little, to avoid the scandal to you that would have resulted from our immediate parting. But you must see it is only for form's sake.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 250)

Thereafter, Tess returns home where her family remains impoverished and she has no place to stay. She receives a letter from Angel telling her that he has gone to the north of England. She uses this as an excuse to leave Marlott. Angel decides to keep the breaking of his marriage as a secret from his parents, but they are clever enough to realize that some difficulties have occurred in his marriage. Angel becomes a victim as he hides this situation from his parents.

Tess faces the misery of her fate with Angel when her letter by chance slips underneath the carpet of her lover's door, and consequently, he was unaware of her past secret with Alec.

She accepts his marriage proposal because she believes that he knows her past secret. The narrator of the novel brings out the irony of the situation and states:

The carpet reached close to the sill, and under the edge of the carpet she discerned the faint white margin of the envelope containing her letter to him, which he obviously had never seen, owing to her having in her haste thrust it beneath the carpet as well as beneath the door.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 217)

B.R. Mullik (1957: 7) also comments about the coincidence which occurs about Tess's letter to Angel Clare:

At the very threshold of life she meets the wrong man. A few days before she marries Angel Clare, she pushes under the door of his bedroom a written confession, which slips out of sight under the carpet where it remains concealed until found by Tess on the wedding morning.

As soon as Angel discovers her seduction by Alec, he leaves her alone, even though both the lovers have avowed to stay together after their marriage. However, the coincidence in which the letter slipped under the carpet brings tragedy in their married life.

Tess suffers from low self-esteem and feels psychologically unstable and distressed. Her state of mind allows Alec to seduce her again. Eventually, she kills Alec when he lies to her that her husband will never come back. She becomes a victim because of her unfavorable fate.

Angel's sleepwalking metaphorically refers to his suffering, to his deeper wound caused by Tess, and reveals his psychological torment. As he is sleepwalks, in a dream-like state he sees his wife dead; he dreams that he carries her in his arms during their honey moon; suddenly he sees her dead. Her loss of chastity is symbolically presented as her death. This imaginary incidence shows how the society of that time has attached a great value to the loss of a woman's virginity. He loses his hope, love, and affection for Tess when he discovers the truth of her seduction by Alec. Angel tortures himself by leaving his wife. He feels victimized because of his wife's seduction. Tess is also victimized when Angel leaves her alone after their marriage.

During their separation, Tess writes letters to Angel. These letters have a great role in determining his actions towards her. He wonders whether her letters reveal her true feelings for him. He doubts if she will ever accept him as her husband again after their separation. Finally, he becomes miserable and decides to accept her letters positively, but the ambiguity of the import of her letters continues in his mind. He becomes lonely and desperate when she is hanged for killing Alec.

In Wellbridge, Angel Clare and Tess stay in one of the d'Urbervilles' ancestral mansions. Ironically, Tess becomes a victim because of Angel's treatment to her. He insists that she should wear the jewelry of the Clare family. He, thus, thinks of her as an estimated lady. This fact starkly contrasts with her actual history as she actually descends from a common family and not from a noble one. In addition, she is considered to be a sinner as per the beliefs of his ancestors because of her seduction. Thus, Tess is victimized by her fate which starkly puts her in a position of shame due to her marriage with Angel.

Heritage is also responsible to make Tess a victim. After Alec's murder, Tess reconciles with Angel. They decide to travel far away in order not to be captured by the police. During their travels, they face hardships. Due to the hardships, their reconciliation proves to be short-lived. Soon, Tess informs Angel that her heritage from the d'Urberville has bestowed on her the moral deficiency which makes her capable of killing Alec. Alec, thus, is the victim of the d'Urberville heritage. She is the main victimizer of the d'Urberville family as she kills Alec.

Like Tess, Angel becomes a victim, too. His parents follow rigid and indiscriminating religious rules which enable them to determine his marriage. His parents want him to marry a woman who belongs to their caste. In their eyes, his marriage with Tess is a failure because they do not belong to the same caste. When Angel finds out her past sin with Alec, he cannot forgive her because he blindly follows his parents' rigid religious rules.

Consequently, he becomes his parents' victim and loses both Tess as well as Mercy Chant, who has been his parents' choice for him. This proves to be the element of fate which brings misery in Angel's life as Mercy Chant becomes Tess's rival. Geoffrey Harvey (2003:85) rightly comments on the irresponsibility of Angel:

Angel Clare does not really take Tess's discourse seriously. He does not listen to her on several important occasions. His is an attempt at cultural appropriation.

Mrs. d' Urberville is another cause behind Tess's Tragedy. Mrs. d'Urbersille treats her as a mere rural servant girl and not as a relative. Alec takes advantage of Mrs. d'Urbervilles' negative behavior towards her and victimizes her. He behaves inappropriately with Tess as he uses her to satisfy his sexual desires. The false unity of Alec's family also victimizes Tess.

The common class to which Tess belongs is also one of the reasons behind Tess's tragedy. She fails to adjust her life with her peers in Chaseborough. She is neither of the same lower class like the other working women nor of the aristocratic class of the d'Urberville family. She insists on going to a weekly dance party with some of the common girls in Chaseborough which creates problems for her as the common girls think that she is from a noble family. They are jealous of her. This coincidence gives Alec the chance to rape her when he pretends that he will take her home. Had the women's fight with Tess not occurred, Tess's

purity could have been saved.

Tess's mother is partially responsible for the tragic situation in her life by trying to induce her to marry a gentleman from the d'Urberville family. During her visit to the d'Urberville family, she becomes a victim to Alec's sexual lust. As an innocent woman, she is not duly aware of Alec's sexual lust towards her. Her mother's desire to link her to the d'Urberville family and her obsession with these thoughts brings misery in her life. This gives Alec an opportunity to use her for satisfying his sexual desire. Her mother should have made her aware of what wicked men can do with innocent, weak and poor girls. Since Tess's mother neglected to teach her this, Tess is trapped by Alec.

The poverty of her family destroys Tess's happy life. Her family members are so tempted to improve their financial situation that they do not consider the negative consequences of sending a young and beautiful girl to the d'Urberville family. This lack of foresight on her father's part brings misery in her life. He is proud of their social standing and considers that the people of Alec's family are good and honest. He should have confirmed about the honesty of the d'Urberville family members before sending his daughter to them. In fact, he puts her at risk. So, neither Tess nor her family takes any caution in saving her from her exploitation by Alec.

Chance and coincidence play a dominant role in ruining Tess's future. It is by chance that her father discovers that his family comes from the oldest and wealthiest family in England. His decision of sending her to the d'Urbervilles family brings misery in her life. Had she not been sent to the d'Urberville family, she would not have met and gotten raped by Alec and her life would have been completely different. So, her fate is also responsible of her tragedy.

Tess fears that her mother will die as she suffers from a serious disease. Unfortunately, however, her father dies. Fate deprives her and her family of her father, who has been the main support of her family members. After the death of her father, the family loses their home and undergoes victimization. His unfortunate death leaves the family helpless. Their helplessness causes their downfall.

After Alec's murder by her, Angel tries to save her by travelling far away from Wessex. They reach Stonehenge and she prefers to stay there to save herself from the police. In the meanwhile, she requests Angel to take care of Liza-Lu. She even asks him to marry Liza-Lu if Tess dies. Had Tess accompanied Angel to the place he wanted to take her to, she could have saved herself from death and proved her purity with the help of the d'Urberville family as well as her ancestors. The following utterance expresses Tess's last desire:

Angel, if anything happens to me, will you watch over Liza-Lu for my sake?' she asked, when they had listened a long time to the wind among the pillars.... She is so good and simple and pure. O, Angel- I wish you would marry her if you lose me, as you will do shortly. O, if you would!

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 410)

Tess is not alone to suffer like this. She is a representative of Victorian female. Geoffrey Harvey (2003:34) rightly comments on women's double victimization during the Victorian era:

Women were also denied any sexual feelings. And they were doubly victims of idealization and abuse, particularly of the double standard in sexual morality, which branded liberated women as 'fallen' while condoning their lovers.

4.4 Characters as Victimizers in *Jude the Obscure*

In *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy criticizes the institution of marriage of the Victorian era. This novel is an attempt to explain how the norms of religion related to marriage adversely affect the relationships between husband and wife. Hardy opposes immature marriages - marriage at the first meeting without considering the responsibilities that go with it. Immature marriages lead to short-lived relations and eventually spoil the lives of the couples and pose very serious problems to society and the very institution of marriage.

Most of the married men and women become victims of each other as they reject the norms of religion and the social institution of marriage. Richard Phillotson is victimized by his own deeds; he allows his wife to live with her cousin though they are not husband and wife. Because of that, he loses his job as a teacher. Later, he could not find a suitable job to suit his education and experience. He loses his image of a respected teacher in the society. U.S. Mathur's (1968: 133) comments support this point of view:

They have in them some weakness, disability, inherited instinct, or perhaps some error in the assertion of their strength, which inevitably becomes the chance for the power of the world finally to assert itself against them.

Jude and Sue become victims because of their misunderstanding of real love. Their love creates many difficulties and serious problems. His love for Sue is true love. He loves her for everything she is and what she is not. He doesn't seem to be projecting any ideal on her, though he admits that he is selfish. He wants her but he cannot have her for the following three reasons:

The first reason was that he was married, and it would be wrong. The second was that they were cousins. It was not well for cousins to fall in love even when circumstances seemed to favour the passion. The third: even were he free, in a family like his own where marriage usually meant a tragic sadness, marriage with a blood- relation would duplicate the adverse, conditions, and a tragic sadness might be intensified to a tragic horror.

(Jude the Obscure, 111)

On the contrary, Sue does not believe in love after marriage. She considers it as a prison to her freedom. So, they are forced to travel from place to place to avoid being known by others as adulterers since they live together as husband and wife though they are not legally married. Still, Jude likes to be with his cousin though he is advised by his aunt to give up his relationship with her. Drusilla Fawley warns Jude:

And there'll be a worse thing if you, tied and bound as you be, should have a fancy for Sue.

(Jude the Obscure, 137)

Jude and Sue become victims due to their deeds which are totally unacceptable to the people in the Victorian era. They reject to follow the existing social and religious norms. Sue decides to leave her formal husband, Richard Phillotson, and live illegally with her cousin, Jude. David Daiches (1969:1081) rightly observes:

Jude and Sue are trapped characters from the beginning- trapped by their own essential selves as well as by external circumstances.

Sue is partially responsible for Richard Phillotson's downfall. Their marriage proves to be a failure as it ends in their separation. She is not ready to stay with her lawful husband. Sue asks her husband:

Richard, she said all at once; would you mind my living away from you?

(Jude the Obscure, 275)

Richard Phillotson pays a very heavy price in order to please his wife. She abandons him. He is a kind-hearted man who has an unorthodox view just like Jude and Sue. He is considered to be one of the tragic figures in *Jude the Obscure* because he truly loves Sue. He is more concerned with her happiness than anything else. He admits to be somewhat selfish in his desire to have her for his own.

He addresses her as a pupil-teacher in his school when he feels that she has an interest in becoming a scholar in Christminster. On the contrary, Sue does not love him though she marries him. She even once jumps out of the window to avoid physical intimacy with him. Her strange and whimsical behavior makes Richard Phillotson permit her to live with her cousin illegally. He loses his respect, job, and even his further education in Christminster as a result of his unorthodox views, and her strange behavior. He is victimized when his wife leaves him for the sake of her cousin. He allows her to go to her lover because he fears that she might kill herself. The following passage describes his critical situation:

The climax came last night, when, owing to my entering her room by accident, she jumped out of window - so strong was her dread of me! She pretended it was a dream, but that was to sooth me.

(Jude the Obscure, 284)

Margaret Drabble's (1976: 72) observations also support this interpretation:

Sue's marriage to Mr. Phillotson is the baldest inconsistency. She has a sort of unworldliness and caprice that allows her to undertake this union.

It is not only Sue who is to be blamed for the downfall of her husband; Phillotson's strange attitude is also responsible for his downfall. He lives alone, feels lonely, and undergoes a number of problems and crises in his later life.

Female characters like Sue play hostile role in Jude's downfall. She is one of the causes of his tragedy. Her whimsical behavior contributes to her cruelty as she decides to live with him without the consent of the society. It is also because of her unconventional and modern traits. Sue thinks that to marry is to end one's freedom. Her lawful marriage with Richard Phillotson and her unlawful relations with her cousin are both constraints on her liberty. According to her, the relationship between man and woman is based on sexual desires. She is in favour of free sex. She enjoys freedom of sex outside her marriage. Here, she goes against the social, moral and religious rules. Her behavior is immoral and society cannot approve it. Moreover, she has strong fascination for a man who is her close relative and society does not permit it. She rejects all moral, social, cultural and religious sanctions and does not only live with Jude as his unlawful wife but also bears two children for him. She is a kind of revolutionary 'new liberated woman'. She is not ready to accept the social rules that govern marriages. The following expression makes us understand Sue's strange views:

You forget that I must have loved you, and wanted to be your wife, even if there had been no obstacle, said Sue with a gentle seriousness which did not reveal her mind 'And then we are cousins, and it is

bad for cousins to marry. And-I am engaged to somebody else. As to our going on together as we were going, in a sort of friendly way, the people round us would have made it unable to continue.

(Jude the Obscure, 208)

Jude is victim of his own dream of becoming a scholar at Christminster. The novel is about the struggle between his intellectual ambition and bodily pleasures. He cannot follow his intellectual ambition as his lust ties him down to the women he loves and he gets no time for learning. When Jude is eleven years old, he dreams of becoming a scholar. He decides to study Greek and Latin at Christminster. This is because he has been advised and inspired by Richard Phillotson that Christminster is the enlightened place of knowledge. He also wants to follow the example of his schoolmaster, who promises to take him to the enlightened place. But it never happens. Jude is disappointed by Mr. Richard Phillotson's behavior and stays in Marygreen. He is victimized by Richard Phillotson because he does not take him to Christminster. It is also because Richard Phillotson follows his own ambition only to be a well-respected man in the eyes of the Victorian society. Albert J. Guerard's (1963: 114) views support this interpretation:

Jude is as frustrated by Sue, his ideal, intellectual woman, as he is by Oxford, his equally shining ideal of the intellectual life. Frustration is the permanent condition of his life.

Jude Fawley is determined to follow his dream as he asserts:

Nevertheless, it is the center of the universe to me
because of my early dream: and nothing can alter
it.

(Jude the Obscure, 393)

Another reason why Jude fails in his intellectual pursuit is his poverty. He is from a poor family, so he cannot pursue his study in Christminster. He decides to work as a stonemason in Alfredston. He proves to be an intelligent, clever, and hard working; he studies Latin by himself though he has no teacher. He undergoes a number of difficulties because of his poverty while studying.

Little Father Time is another instrumental element which victimizes Jude. He proves to be the dominant tragic figure in his life. He is born eight months after Arabella's departure to Australia. Arabella Donn tells Jude Fawley:

The fact is, Jude, that, though I have never
informed you before, there was a boy born of our
marriage, eight months after I left you, when I
was at Sydney, living with my father and mother.

(Jude the Obscure, 335)

Jude is a poor man, but he struggles very hard to make his family happy. He travels from place to place to find shelter and food for his family. His poverty causes a number of problems in his life. It is his legal and moral duty to take care of his son as Arabella's parents in Australia cannot look after him anymore.

Little Father Time, who is a strange, anxious, and withdrawn boy with a morose temperament, brings another disaster in the lives of Jude and Sue. He victimizes his younger brothers due to the problems caused by the increasing number of family members and consequent poverty. He kills his younger step brothers because Sue tells him that their family will lose shelter since they have too many family members. Then he kills himself and causes additional sadness in Jude's life. Margaret Drabble's (1976:73) comments throw light on this tragic occasion:

Sue does have children - an inauthenticity for her. The children come under the doom of thought, of analysis. They die in the nihilistic suicide decision of Little Father Time, the watchful, brooding son of Arabella and Jude.

Thus, Little Father Time, an immature boy, is unnecessarily victimized by Sue's wayward attitude toward him. Sue proves to be one of the causes behind the tragedy of Jude and little Father Time.

The death of Jude's children brings another disaster in his marital life. The tragic event causes the separation of the lovers. Sue blames herself for this sorrowful tragedy. She feels guilty because she considers the death of her children as a punishment to her from God for her sins and immoral and illicit relations. Thereafter, she decides to remarry Richard Phillotson and return to him to Marygreen. All these tragic events make Jude a drunkard, desolate and hopeless.

Arabella's sensual desires cause the downfall of Jude. When he is nineteen years old, he becomes a victim of her tricks. She further victimizes him when she traps him into marriage. She informs him that she is pregnant by him. Unlike Sue, Arabella symbolizes the flesh in her relations with Jude and shows her animalistic passions only. She does not have any love and respect for his intellectual qualities. He is further victimized by her when she marries Dr. Villbert in Australia. He lives a sad and lonely life due to her inconsistent, selfish, passionate, and whimsical behavior. Margaret Drabble (1976: 70) rightly observes:

When Jude thinks of ending his affair with Arabella, she deceives him about pregnancy and they marry, in hopelessness, without any joy or understanding of each other.

The following expression rightly makes us understand Arabella Donn's deceptive intention and tricks:

In a few moments Arabella replied in a curiously low, hungry tone of latent sensuousness: 'I 've got him to care for me: yes! But I want him to more than care for me; I want him to have me-to marry me! I must have him. I can't do without him. He's the sort of man I long for. I shall go mad if I can't give myself to him altogether! I felt I should when I first saw him.

(Jude the Obscure, 60)

Jude's health begins to deteriorate severely when he goes to Marygreen to pay Sue a last visit. Arabella informs him that Sue and Richard Phillotson live as husband and wife. Finally, while Arabella is out enjoying the festival, Jude dies, alone and unattended, remembering the deaths of his children.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter throws light on the actions of the characters as victimizers in the selected novels of Thomas Hardy. This chapter deals with the characters who are either victims of their own passions, dreams, attitudes, thoughts, actions, etc. or victimizers. Their deeds play a much greater role in the destruction of the people than fate, chance, nature, or even the supernatural elements. Henchard is almost the main cause behind the downfall of Susan, Elizabeth-Jane, Farfrae and Lucetta. Similarly, Alec is one of the main reasons in victimizing Tess. He ruins her life when he rapes her. So, he is responsible for further tragedies in her life. In contrast, Jude's tragedy is the result of the misbehaviors of other characters like Sue, Arabella, and Richard Phillotson. The obstinate actions of these characters ruin his dream to become a scholar in Christminster University.

Chapter V

Nature as Victimizer

5.1 Preliminaries

The focus of this chapter is on the role of nature as victimizer in Thomas Hardy's selected novels. Nature has a very significant place in the novels of Hardy. In fact, nature is a true home of man. It is in nature that man survives. He gets his strength from nature. She caters to the basic needs of man. He himself is the product of nature. Nature also works through him. His impulses, passions, whims, health, etc. are directly influenced by nature. The future of humanity depends on her. The happenings in nature positively or negatively affect human life.

There are different views to look at the role of nature in human life. Prior to Hardy, there were two perspectives regarding nature. One view was that of Wordsworth which emphasized the positive role of her. For Wordsworth, nature is mother, nurse, teacher, friend, philosopher and guide. He believed that she is the source of solace, happiness, moral support to man. He could listen to the still sad music of humanity in the company of nature. The other perspective was the evolutionary view of Charles Darwin. He proved that nature as well as human life evolved in the course of time. Man is dependent on nature for his sustenance. Nature provides the context for the struggle of his existence. She can be favourable or unfavourable to him.

Hardy is aware of both the perspectives. However, he adds one more element to these views; he mixes his pessimism and the role of fate or destiny with nature.

It is interesting to know if Hardy considers nature to be un/favourable or un/sympathetic to man. The emphasis of the present study is on negative role of nature in human affairs. Hardy does not only consider nature to be unsympathetic but also indifferent, callous and hostile to human beings. It does not mean that he totally rejects her positive significance in shaping human life.

Hardy depicts all aspects of nature. He does not only focus on the good and beautiful things in nature but also on the cruel and ugly side of it. He is very vivid and minute in depicting the details of the natural scenes. While commenting on *Nature as Characters in Thomas Hardy's Wessex Novels* (an article in The Faculty journal of Komazawa Women's University 10, 121-207) J.B. Jones (2003: 121) states:

Some of the most powerful descriptive and poetic passages in Thomas Hardy's novels involve the world of nature. His use of closely observed detail when depicting nature and natural processes is perhaps unrivaled in English fiction.

Like Wordsworth, Hardy has a special interest in rustic people and rural life. His novels present many great scenes depicting the rustics. However, Hardy does not glorify them like Wordsworth.

He gives the real picture of their lives and shows how they are helpless in clutches of fate and nature. He does not take a stand like Wordsworth who thought that the rustic people are pure, innocent and good. Hardy's depiction of the rustic people is very lively, realistic and effective. The rustic scenes in his novels are the beautiful and lovely spots on the backdrop of the tragic atmosphere. In fact, sometimes these scenes seem to work as comic relief in his tragedies. J.B. Jones (2003: 121) further states:

One of his great strengths as a novelist is the way he portrays the interaction of his characters with the natural world, which he often characterizes as *sentient*; in many instances, he even gives the natural world *human attributes*. His characters can usually be seen in different relationships to the natural world: Nature may be seen as merely *decorative*; it can be seen as *illustrative*, ie. in harmony with the character (s) moods or situation, in essence, a projection of the inner state of the character; it is sometimes *determinative* of action, ie. the weather or natural features *influence* the moods and behavior of the character (s); it may be *a controlling influence*, causing characters to take action in some way; and finally, it can itself be a *main character*, as Egdon Heath is in Return of the Native. (*Italics not original*)

Nature, in this way, has a very active role to play in Hardy's novels. She has her own senses. Hardy gives her human qualities. Sometimes she is in tune with human beings; sometimes she reflects the moods of the characters. At times, Hardy uses her as decorative device, while most of the time she is used as illustrative of the action of the character. She determines the future of the characters and influences their lives. In a way, she is a very active character in his novels.

5.2 Nature as Victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

The city of Casterbridge itself seems to be a dominant character in the novel. It has moods, emotions, and a magnetic appeal that affect characters in the novel. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a great novel which presents a wealth of naturalistic details. It shows a sight of rural life which is nearly linked to nature. People, in this place, live simple agricultural life. They are associated with traditional values and customs. Albert J. Guerard (1963: 98) says:

Founding itself upon an ancient psychology, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* celebrates, first of all, the subordination of the passions that link man with nature to the reason that unites him with God.

The story of this novel is presented by Thomas Hardy through the geographical details of the English countryside. It begins in the region of Upper Wessex, a place invented by Hardy. The setting of the story is based on the countryside where Thomas Hardy lived as a child. He gives a vivid description of the landscape through which Henchard and his wife pass. He presents the realistic characters from the rural world.

Nature has been presented in a state of decay in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The emotions of the characters are presented accordingly. Features such as the rotten leaves and the dust clouds reflect the pessimistic states of the characters.

Nature ruins Henchard's family and reinforces the family's mistakes. For example, Henchard feels that his marriage is a big mistake and Susan feels that she is going to be in the company of other men. Susan escapes from the tent of the bar-maid when a sparrow appears at the bar and Susan is identified with the sparrow. Like the bird, she also escapes from the tortures of her husband. Her identification with the natural world works as a mirror to reflect her actions.

Nature plays a great role for the downfall of the characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The domination of the weather is presented twice in the novel. The first time is when the rain ruins Henchard's preparations for a grand entertainment. The second time is when he speculates heavily on the weather and loses. As a result, he faces bankruptcy. B.R. Mullik (1957:6) rightly observes:

Hardy embodies fate in various forms. Sometimes it appears as a natural force. Henchard's plan for making himself rich are brought to thought by a bad harvest; the weather takes the part of fate here.

Nature rules the lives of most of the characters in this novel including Henchard and Farfrae. It affects Henchard's life negatively when he predicts that the weather is going to be good during the time of his entertainment, but it isn't, whereas weather works positively with Farfrae when the natural world appears useful for the success of his dance.

For example, the trees provide convenience and the greenness and brightness of their leaves to enlighten and entertain him. They also affect the lives of the characters adversely. For example, Henchard, and Susan are symbolically presented as doomed leaves as they die before the end of the novel. J.B. Jones (2003: 121) states:

It has been noted that "Hardy instinctively unites nature and man, making the external setting a kind of sharer in the human fate" (Howe; 23) and that he writes so that "the landscape takes its place as an actor in the drama of human life" (CH; 413). Perhaps no other writer, living or dead had such an understanding of nature and at the same time possessed the writing skill and emotional depth to capture and convey this world in print.

Nature gives the last chance to Henchard when the sparrow appears in the tent of the bar-maid. Hardy uses such symbols to show that nature indirectly victimizes the human beings.

The cry of the sparrow is Michael Henchard's last alert to wake up to what he is doing:

For a long time there was none, beyond the voice of a weak bird singing a trite old evening song that might doubtless have been heard on the hill at the same hour, and with the self-same, quavers, and braves, at any sunset of that season for centuries untold.

The bird's appearance is kind of a warning to caution him to take control of himself and keep himself away from selling his wife. Henchard, on the contrary, refuses to accept the warning of the bird. Thus, his behavior is in contrast with the behavior of the inhabitants of the country people. Albert J. Guerard (1963:98) comments:

Henchard's tragedy is that he has, in repudiating his solidarity with human community, subverted the order that has placed man in the middle ground between God and nature.

Michael Henchard is the victim of nature when he walks through the section of Casterbridge and nature mocks the fact that he has no child since he has lost one when he sold his wife. In other words, he has lost his child Elizabeth-Jane. Hence, he is the first victimizer to his daughter and at the same time is a victim of his fate which is determined by nature.

Nature plays a great role in ruining the lives of the characters. It can manifest in many ways throughout the lives of Hardy's characters. Sometimes it takes the shape of fate. For example, Henchard sells off his family, Susan and his daughter Elizabeth-Jane to a stranger. This shows the scene of the gloomy nature, which is presented in the eyes of the hero, it symbolically refers to Henchard's downfall. W.R. Goodman (2008: 424) comments:

Nature which he describes sometimes with charm and sometimes with a terrifying impressiveness, is the spectator of human tragedy, or not infrequently conspires with the unseen forces that guide the universe to lead poor, passionate, but not very intelligent men and women to suffering and disaster.

The townspeople in Casterbridge consider nature as their means to survive, so they live in harmony with it. The greenness of the landscape surrounds Casterbridge. The townspeople believe in the traditional way which unknowingly destroys their living. For instance, when Michael Henchard depends on the prediction of the forecaster, he loses all of his grain because it is bad due to climatic changes. It is a bad harvest, so it proves to be hostile. As a result, he becomes a victim as he cannot predict the changes in nature and as he depends on the forecaster's predictions. Fate pushes him downward when he discovers that it is not possible to accept Elizabeth-Jane as his daughter as she is the daughter of the sailor. He puts his hand in his enemy Jopp's hand because their characters are identical, and they have a strange relationship. Finally, Michael Henchard returns to the gloomy side of town to release his depression in the natural surroundings.

The setting of the novel represents the ancient history of Casterbridge. The people naturally help one another as and when needed. The customs and traditions of the ancient people are still performed.

For instance, Hardy has a belief in the individual, and the incident of the weather-prophet is the best example when Henchard loses all what he has as a mayor in Casterbridge. This shows that nature affects his prosperity and makes him a victim of its own working.

In fact, the rural way of life has some limitations, and it is true, to some extent, that it could be replaced by scientific innovations. It helps people reduce their dependence on knowing the natural rhythms of the land. For example, when Farfrae invents a machine to turn the bad kernels of wheat into good ones, he brings destruction to the lives of the poor people who don't have knowledge in this field, including Michael Henchard.

The progress from ancient to modern inventions is symbolically represented in this novel. It is between the relationship of the two mayors of Casterbridge, Henchard and Farfrae. Henchard represents the ancient method of predicting the weather. His methods of farming depend on trust and guess work which leads to his downfall. He becomes a simple worker after losing his position as mayor in Casterbridge. David Daiches (1969: 1077) comments:

There is a limit to man's control over nature, but it is not nearly so narrow as Henchard thinks.

Old and nature-dependent Henchard has to be replaced by modern technology which controls and manipulates even nature as Farfrae proves.

Henchard's death in the deserted cottage is another example which shows how nature destroys the life of the characters in this novel. Henchard has an exactly opposite way to life than that of his rival and as a result the new mayor Farfrae occupies his position.

The Mayor of Casterbridge is set in the country of Wessex. It is a land which had depended on the beliefs of the farming folk for centuries. The farmers are more connected to the land, therefore they follow the primal religion which is based on the forces of nature as well as the changing of seasons. For example, one of the forces of nature is cruel fate, which spoils the dreams of the characters and fulfillment of their hopes as human beings.

Usually, fate works in the form of two concepts. The first one is chance. For example, Farfrae and Lucetta are brought to Casterbridge quite unexpectedly, but their arrival ruins the life of Henchard. The second is irony. Hostile and ironically dooming forces work against the characters who are in Casterbridge. For instance, Elizabeth-Jane has been convinced by Michael Henchard that she is his daughter, but ironically the letter from Susan tells him the truth that he is not her real father and disturbs their relationship.

Sometimes nature helps the element of fate which leads to the downfall of the characters. For instance, Michael Henchard buys all the grain at high prices. Then the weather turns bad resulting in a poor harvest, which lead to his bankruptcy.

Thus, nature participates in ruining Henchard's life. As a result, life becomes the subject of pain and suffering because of the working of a primal and unchanging world against weak humans like Michael Henchard. W.R. Goodman (2008: 425) observes:

The universal process is a meaningless thing; and man and his little life and his little doings are but play things having no definite purpose, or more properly speaking, having no option in the course of things.

Nature affects the mood of the people in Casterbridge and thus it brings destruction in their lives. For example, the domination of nature on the townspeople is responsible for the skimmity-ride in which Lucetta and Henchard become victims.

The townspeople in Casterbridge have a belief that fate is a tool of the past. Thus, their lives are ruined as they believe in superstitions. For instance, Henchard believes that fate is one of the causes behind his destruction. His life comes to an end and all his problems continue until he dies. By casting off his old beliefs, he could have changed his life for the better. Albert J. Guerard (1963: 93) comments:

The series of fatal reappearances that challenges and undermines Henchard's illegitimate power schematizes the determined revenge of a supernatural authority.

The grain market also plays a dominant role in shaping the lives of both Michael Henchard and the people in Casterbridge. The rise and fall of the mayor depends more on the fluctuations of the harvest than his personal relationship with Susan, Elizabeth-Jane, Farfrae, and Lucetta. The demand and supply of grain is the bigger struggle between Henchard and Farfrae than their abilities and popularity with the townsfolk. David Daiches (1969: 1076) comments:

Nature does not change or at least it has not changed, and characters like Michael Henchard regard Nature something that can only be controlled by submitting to it.

Finally, the whole economy of Casterbridge depends on the vagaries of nature. Economic power of people affects their relationships. So, nature upturns their lives. Henchard is ruined as his economy is destroyed by the weather. His relationships with people of the town and his rival are spoilt. He loses his power and position. On the other hand, Farfrae rises up as a new force in the town, he becomes a successful businessman, and finally he gets the post of the mayor of the town. Henchard's character ironically exemplifies that crimes and punishments are not in control of human beings but forces like nature controls them and man is just a puppet in the hands of such powers.

The horrible and grotesque past of the town affects Michael Henchard strongly; especially the Roman earth-work of Casterbridge. This place is an obscure location in Casterbridge and is infamous for

murders. He chooses this place to meet his long-lost wife, Susan. He also selects another area near the town which refers to similar connotations. It is surrounded by an ancient Roman earth-work. It is used for his ill advice on the programme of entertainment in Casterbridge which is in direct contrast to Farfrae's dance in town. Thus, Henchard's life is foreshadowed by pessimism in human life and nature and ultimately he is defeated. Nature and places in nature are active characters in interacting with human beings and affecting human life in positive or negative way, especially negative manner in Hardy's novels. Albert J. Guerard (1963: 104) observes:

Like its maimed and guilt-haunted ruler, then, Casterbridge is demoralized and disabled by a grisly past.

Along with nature, the supernatural element is also very powerful in influencing the lives of the characters and causing their downfall. During his childhood, Thomas Hardy inherited certain superstitions from his family. He had heard various stories of supernatural occurrences from the family servants, rustics from the village, and his own mother. His mother believed that she once saw a ghost. Therefore, Hardy himself became a believer in the supernatural elements as well as the superstitious beliefs of the rustic people. For example, from an early age, he had begun to realize the cruelty of nature. Thus, the event influenced his thinking negatively because once he and his father observed a half frozen bird in the garden. His father tried to shoo away the bird but instead it fell dead.

5.3 Nature as Victimizer in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Like society, nature and supernatural powers make people victims in the countryside of Wessex. The story of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* takes place in Southwest England. It is considered the favorable setting for Thomas Hardy's novels. Hardy calls this setting by the old Anglo-Saxon name of Wessex. It is an ancient rural place, and its nature negatively affects the lives of its people. Marlott is a small village in which Tess lives since her childhood. Her parents take comfort in sending their daughter to the d'Urberville family because they are informed that they are formally related to one of the noble families in Wessex and they consider this d'Urberville family is noble one. Tess's father loses his horse which was the only source of the family income. Tess is horrified by the death of the horse and the loss of income due to it and the resultant poverty of the family. She considers herself to the cause of the death of the horse and so, she takes it upon herself to earn some income for the family by working in the noble family. She is helpless and cowed down by the poverty of her parents and that is why she accepts the job for the sake of her family. U.S. Mathur (1968: 130) says:

Hardy is at very many places trying to link nature with the thought processes of Tess. Nature shows its most serious and grim visage when she is most 'desolate', most grief-stricken. Hardy seems to be intensifying 'natural processes around Tess till they seem part of her story.

Nature is considered as a living force with a will and purpose. It is also considered to be the silent and ironic spectator of the human beings. For example, when Tess is seduced by Alec in the heart of natural surroundings, nature proves to be the devil shelter for her. It proves to no longer be a guardian angel for her. On the other hand, it is very much favourable to the seducer. In this way, nature is one of the victimizers of Tess as she is raped in the terrible dark night.

Male domination is one of the reasons behind her rape. It also shows the assistance of the supernatural powers in favour of the males. This means that God has originally created females weak. For example, Tess is described as:

Every seesaw of her breath, every wave of her blood, every pulse singing in her ears, was a voice that joined with nature in revolt against her scrupulousness.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 182)

Women should take care of their character. However, Tess suffers a lot because of her weakness in her personality. She becomes a victim to the world she is created in because she is trapped, tricked, and deceived by others like Alec and Angel Clare.

Characters, in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, are left to the supernatural powers of nature which are created by God. The supernatural powers influence the lives of people negatively through their unfavorable fate and accidentally become victims. Human beings are also responsible for their own downfall to some extent as they deal with the natural powers adversely. For example, Tess asks Angel Clare if he believes that they will meet in the life after death. Tess could not predict that they are going to be together after death. Tess loses her hope even in the life after death as a result of her seduction by Alec. Tess utters:

Tell me now, Angel, do you think we shall meet again after we are dead? I want to know.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 411)

Tim Horton's (2009: 434) comments are quite supporting:

Like the great tragedies of the fifth-century Athens and Elizabethan England, Hardy's Novels of Character and Environment convey a strong sense of fatalism, a view that in life human actions have been predetermined, either by the very nature of things, or by God, or by Fate.

In contrast to Alec, Tess is pure, honorable, and chaste. Despite the fact that Tess is raped on a dark night, she hopes for a bright, happy life by killing Alec. She kills him for his villainous act of raping her. However, her revenge on him is too much delayed.

She sacrifices herself for the sake of Angel Clare; she even suggests him to marry her sister, Liza-Lu, after her execution on the charge of killing Alec, if he can. Tess utters:

Angel', she said, as if waiting for this, 'do you know what I have been running after you for? To tell you that I have killed him!' A pitiful white smile lit her face as she spoke.

(Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 400)

Nature hosts the dark and pale atmosphere which causes the death of the horse and it becomes the cause of her suffering. By chance, an accident takes place and the horse dies which was the only source of Tess's family income. Unfavorable fate complicates their life. Her family finds out, ironically, another source of income to save themselves from poverty. They decide to send their daughter, Tess, to claim kinship from the d'Urberville family because Tess takes the responsibility for the death of their horse and prepares herself to serve the d'Urberville family. Her departure to the d'Urberville family brings complications in her life. She is used as a tool for physical enjoyment by Alec d'Urbervilles. Thus, the death of the horse, which is the unpredictable fate, ruins Tess's life and her family. U.S. Mathur (1968: 23) observes:

Apart from coincidence, chance also at times an interesting role in the drama of Tess. The killing of John Durbeyfield's horse is the direct cause which thrusts Tess into the presence of Alec d'Urbervilles.

Alec rapes Tess on a dark devil night. She becomes pregnant because of Alec's devilish deeds. She becomes Alec's victim as she becomes his child's mother before getting married. Alec proves to be a devil because he does not take care of his child and her as he leaves them in the heart of nature. Tess decides to leave Alec's family. She travels throughout the moors of the countryside in order to save her child from the hard circumstances, but unfortunately she could not save her child due to physical strain, hardships and difficulties. Thus, Alec's devilish act is responsible for victimizing Tess and her child. U.S. Mathur (1968: 140) rightly comments:

If there is any characters in Hardy's novels who is guided purely by an animal thirst for sensual gratification, it is Alec d'Urberville.

Tess's journey from Marlott to the d'Urberville family is marked by the dominant role of nature. Her father becomes a drunkard due to the happy news about his family. Tess decides to drive the horse carriage on behalf of her father. Unfortunately, the horse dies. Tess is caught in a difficult situation. She is considered to be a murderer by the Wessex people as well as by her ancestors. She becomes a victim of her fate which leads her to become a responsible servant in the d'Urberville family.

Tim Horton's (2009:442) observations support the former interpretations and arguments:

His tragic heroes and heroines cry out defiantly against their fate, but accept their doom with an insight into and an awareness of the forces of evil which have affected their downfall.

The dark night in the countryside of Wessex is also one of the dominant supernatural forces which ruin the happy life of people like Tess. She is invited to a party nearby market town in the countryside of Wessex. She goes to the party with a group of women. She drinks and loses consciousness. Alec looks at her from a sexual point of view. A quarrel breaks out among the girls and Alec decides to help Tess by taking her home to save her from the quarrel. He deceives her villainously and seduces her. Tess loses her virginity and further tragedy begins. Albert J. Guerard (1963:80) states:

... the accident occurs in darkness and Tess has fallen asleep.

The following paragraph describes the gloomy situation:

Everything else was blackness alike. D'Urberville stooped; and heard a gentle regular breathing. He knelt and bent lower, till her breath warmed his face, and in a moment his cheek was in contact with hers. She was sleeping soundly, and upon her eyelashes there lingered tears.

Sandbourne is a fashionable and thriving village in the countryside of Wessex. It proves to be in stark contrast to other regions in which Tess has stayed. It represents the indifferent life of Tess's tragedy when she returns back to the sophisticated and urban life of Alec d'Urbervilles. Sandbourne enables Tess to adopt the fashionable and stylish dress of the Wessex life. It also endows her with an appearance and assurance in Angel Clare's strength as a husband. She decides not to return back to Alec's life. She discovers that Angel Clare will be her savior. J.B. Jones (2003: 121) states:

Nature in all its forms becomes a protagonist in his work. Hardy saw nature as a sentient force with a definite personality; by allowing his characters to interact with nature in his fictional countryside of Wessex, Hardy is able to add to his fiction a great sense of drama and a profound vision of man in harmony with the natural world.

Church is considered to be a holy and respectable place. However, it is one of the reasons behind Tess's tragedy as she faces hardships to justify her pregnancy among the people who look negatively at her in the church. She does not find the church comfortable as it offers her no solace or healing power; on the contrary, the priest rejects a proper burial for dead baby and in a way humiliates an innocent person for no fault of her.

Tess's heritage can be considered as one of the supernatural powers which is also responsible for ruining her life. She has the same weakness of personality as her father and mother do have. This is because her parents accept the idea of her to work as a maid even though she is only seventeen years old. They are not cautious about the risk involved in sending their young daughter to a strange family. They do not realize the risk of lusty men who can spoil the life of their child. Tess becomes a victim of the sexual hunger of one of the males around her.

Tess decides to visit the graveyard of her baby. She is detected by some people and considered a sinner. It creates a series of difficulties and complications for her. She becomes a victim because of her baby's grave.

5.4 Nature as Victimizer in *Jude the Obscure*

To some extent, nature and the supernatural powers are responsible for the downfall of the characters in *Jude the Obscure*. These powers victimize them because these forces are beyond their control. Jude Fawley has a craving to become a scholar but he fails in gaining scholarship because of his sheer poverty and uncontrollable desires. He has a strange personality and obscure attitudes towards life. He is an ambitious man. When he is eleven year old, he dreams to study at Christminster - an enlightened place. Even though Christminster is physically close to him, he is far away from its intellectual pleasures and light because they are meant for rich and the privileged. It remains his unfulfilled aim. Ever since he has been told about the greatness of Christminster University, it has been in his imagination. His dream of becoming a scholar becomes one of the reasons of his tragedy; it makes him a victim because he cannot fulfill his aim. B.R. Mullik (1957: 10) rightly says:

Nature, first of all, played a larger part in his books than in those of any other English novelist. It is not just the background in his drama, but a leading character in it. Sometimes it exercises an active influence on the course of events: more often it is a spiritual agent, coloring the mood and shaping the disposition of human beings.

Jude Fawley's unfavorable fate makes him a victim because he could not fulfill his aim to study in Christminster. Instead, by chance he meets a very attractive and beautiful woman, Arabella Donn, who makes him indulge in her love tricks. He is entrapped in a sexual relationship with her. Consequently, he cannot pursue his study. His meeting with Arabella proves to be one of the superhuman powers which is beyond his control.

Margaret Drabble's (1976: 69) comments in this context support the researcher's interpretation:

Arabella represents the classical entrapment by sex: the entrapment of an innocent sensual man by a hard, needy, shackling woman. Arabella's coarseness is a mirror of Jude's weakness. Her qualities are force of a negative kind; their bad effects upon others are far more devastating than any advantages she may reap for herself.

Similarly, Richard Phillotson who represents the hypocrisy of Victorian society, is also one of the reasons behind Jude's tragedy because he kindles the desire of learning in him. He has promised Jude that he will take him to Christminster University to fulfill his dream to become a scholar. He does not keep his word. His deception of not taking Jude with him to study in Christminster works against Jude.

Christminster is the enlightened place of knowledge. Jude has an intellectual attraction to study at Christminster and become a scholar. He worships this enlightened place as if it were Jerusalem. However, in one way or another, a series of obstacles are in the way of him reaching it, and he is not successful in learning at that university. So, he remains unhappy and disturbed.

The following paragraph appropriately summarizes the situation:

It was not till now, when he found himself actually on the spot of his enthusiasm, that Jude perceived how far away from the object of that enthusiasm he really was. Only a wall divided him from those happy young contemporaries of his with whom he shared a common mental life; men who had nothing to do from morning till night but to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. Only, a wall - but what a wall!

(Jude the Obscure, 106)

Jude meets Sue Bridehead at Christminster University. He falls in love with her. It proves to be fatal for Jude because he discovers that Sue has fallen in love with Richard Phillotson. Jude, himself, is formally engaged to Arabella to be her husband, so he cannot object to Sue's love relationship with Richard. His failure in getting any love affection from his cousin disturbs him psychologically.

Consequently, he could not pursue his admission in Christminster University. He fails to get admission. The place proves to be a fatal place for Jude and he is thrown back in many respects. Geoffrey Harvey (2003: 89) rightly comments:

Christminster, contemptuously described by Sue as the place where Jude was elbowed off the pavement by the millionaires' sons', a place composed of fetishists and ghost-seers, betrays him by its arrogance and exclusivity, represented by the advice of the Master of Biblioll College that he should keep to his trade.

The death of Jude's children is another form of supernatural power which also causes tragic incident in his life. It works in the form of Little Father Time. It was Sue Bridehead who feels indifference and dislike towards Little Father Time. She creates fear in his mind that they are more in number. Due to over-population of the family, they will be asked to vacate their house and they will be shelterless. It affects the innocent and immature mind of Little Father Time. He thinks that the increased number can be reduced by killing his step brothers. The external power makes him commit this fatal act and he kills his step brothers and finally himself. Sue considers the death of her sons by Arabella's son as a bad omen. This is because she has violated the rule of God as she lives with her cousin illegally and, in a way, sinfully bears his children.

She has also neglected Richard Phillotson, who desires to live with her a happy life. She realizes that it is a kind of a divine punishment for her ungratefulness and strangeness towards Richard.

W.R. Goodman (2008: 424) observations rightly summarize the entire situation:

He saw in this world a bitter struggle for existence, thwarted desires, unsatisfied longings, undeserved sufferings, clash of duties, broken commandants, disappointment and disillusionment, high and novel aspirations ending in miserable failures. He finds that children are born where they are not wanted, where there is no lack of them, thus adding to the general misery caused by poverty and augmenting the trials and troubles of their unfortunate parents.

The relationship between nature and Jude is brought out very effectively by a very vivid analogy because of which the process of victimization becomes quite clear. His miserable life is compared with the life of a pig, which eventually is going to be butchered for the purpose of human consumption. His life is similar to the life of a pig as he is at the mercy of the cruel and unjust behaviors of some social members. The symbol of killing the pig represents the devilish power of the Victorian society which makes Jude a victim. The following passage rightly explains the point:

Growing up brought responsibilities, he found.
Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought.
Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for.

(Jude the obscure, 19)

The trap by which the rabbit is caught also represents the devilish power which the Victorian society exercises on its people. Jude and Sue become victims as they are caught in a trap of the social conventions. According to the rules of the Victorian society, both the lovers cannot provide evidence for their innocence until their death. The social rules do not permit them to correct their mistakes. It enables them to get stuck in the darkness of their agony and become heartless. Jude could not feel the suffering of the rabbit which is trapped in the hunter's trap. Society functions as a devilish trap and ruins the life of her people. The narrator rightly said:

He who in his childhood had saved the lives of the
earth-worms now began to picture the agonies of
the rabbit from its lacerated leg.

(Jude the Obscure, 264)

Fog is also one of the dominant figures which help to ruin the life of the protagonist of the novel. On the day of Sue's wedding party, fog becomes instrumental in making the marriage between Sue and Jude impossible. Thus, fog represents the supernatural power, which makes Sue a victim, and consequently, her aims remain unfulfilled.

Finally, the death of the protagonist of the novel is another example of the negative role played by the divine power. It ruins the happy lives of the characters because it is beyond their control. Of course, the negative actions of the concerned characters reinforce the role of the divine power which makes people victims. Jude is the best example because he becomes sad, lonely, poor, and finally dies as he is deserted by his cousin and his wife. Sue and Arabella seem to perform negative actions of such a power, which victimizes Jude.

Geoffrey Harvey's (2003: 91) comments support the researcher's point of view:

Betrayed finally by Arabella, who goes off with Vilbert, the dead Jude lies alone in his room surrounded by the cheers of the celebrating crowd applauding the conferment of degrees on the aristocracy.

5.5 Conclusion

The negative role of nature which is very much clear in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* has been examined, analyzed, and elaborately interpreted in this chapter. Nature and the supernatural powers join hands to victimize the characters of Hardy's novels. As a result, the working of these factors creates a sense of mystery in the lives of his characters. Nature plays a great role for the downfall of the characters. She works in the shape of fate, chance, and the supernatural elements. She is considered to be a living force with a will and purpose. She is also considered a silent and ironic spectator of human suffering.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

6.1 Preliminaries

As stated in Chapter I, this study aims at shedding light on the theme of the victim- victimizer relationship in the Victorian fiction and especially in Thomas Hardy's selected novels namely, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles*, and *Jude the Obscure*. It shows that life of the Victorians have gone through various difficulties in the industrial revolution, the scientific progress, rapid inventions and several unsettling social developments which transformed the life of the people and victimized them. Their conventional outlook was influenced radically. In other words, the life of the Victorians was adversely affected socially, politically, culturally, economically, morally, psychologically, and sexually. Furthermore, novelists of the Victorian fiction such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, and George Eliot have shown different ways in which their characters become either victims or victimizers because of society, economic factors, politics, morality, scientific advancements, etc.

Thomas Hardy lived in the Victorian age which was famous for its gloomy and pessimistic events. As a result, Hardy's writings were mainly written from a gloomy perspective towards life. Most of his writings reflect the pessimistic outlook of the late Victorian era.

The age in which Hardy lived was an age of social changes which forced its people to victimize one another. An example of this is the life of Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Further, it was an age of controversies in various walks of life. For example, the struggle between faith and doubt is seen in the life of Jude Fawley in *Jude the Obscure*.

Morality was based on hypocrisy as seen in the behaviors of the characters in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Some people suffered from poverty as a result of the social and industrial revolution. It was in sharp contrast to the prosperous life of the rich and powerful victimizers in the same era. For example, Jude Fawley undergoes economic difficulties which result in his inability to pursue his studies in Christminster. On the contrary, Richard Phillotson represents the high class of the contemporary life and victimizes Jude by his words.

Materialism and idealism, progress and decline existed together in the same era. This is observed in the life of Michael Henchard who begins as a hay-trusser, becomes the mayor in Casterbridge, and finally becomes a poor man again.

Finally, Thomas Hardy, as a realist focused on the ills of the age. Since he was sensitive by temperament, his writings reflected the spiritual unrest of his age. Though he emphasized the sad aspects of the Victorian era, most of his novels attempt to analyze human nature. He even describes nature as if it were a living human being with live forces in most of his novels like *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

Nature becomes a part of Tess's tragedy when it is no longer a guardian angel when Alec rapes her.

6.2 Main Findings

6.2.1 Society as victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*

1. It is observed that the causes of victimization of people are deep-rooted in the society of the time. The very structure of the society and the orthodox laws in it are responsible for the tragedies of his characters. Dire poverty of his protagonists leads Henchard, Jude and Tess to their pitiful ends. Orthodox marriage laws turn the marriages in tragic farce and so Jude and Sue seek joy and satisfaction in new and liberal form of marriage based on true love. Undue importance to cultural beliefs like 'virginity' destroys the life of Tess. Hardy seems to suggest that society should cater to the rational basic needs of the individuals and all the rules, laws and beliefs of the society should radically change and have human orientation rather than rigidity so that ultimately they contribute to the well being of the society and allow the individuals to prosper and live peaceful life.

2. There is no poetic justice in some tragic novels like *Tess of d'Ubervilles*. The pure and innocent tragic heroine suffers for no fault of her and the villainous seducer seems to prosper. If society, religion and god are not to punish him for his misdeed, Tess thinks that it is her duty to punish him by murdering him. 'The president of the immortals' who is blind or asleep at the time of her seduction at the end awakes instantly to book her for her crime and is finally happy to see Tess hanged to death.

3. Hardy's tragic characters win the sympathy of the readers despite their wrong, immoral and sometimes criminal acts. Henchard sells his wife; Jude begets children without marrying Sue and Tess murders Alec; but all the same they have a soft corner in the hearts of the readers of the novels. It is because they are victims of the environment they are placed in. They are all common human beings willing to live peaceful happy life and struggle very hard for that.

4. Hardy seems to offer some solutions to human problems. Moral rules, religious canons, marriage codes, etc. need not be rigid, outdated and manipulative. They should be open, liberal and above all human. They are created for the well-being of the society and not for destroying the lives of the individuals. They should change as per the need of the hour and there should be rationality in applying them.

Above all, they should have human concern and orientation. Persons like Tess should not suffer at the hands of the Church. Hardy seems to be far ahead of his time when he depicts the free relations between Jude and Sue based on pure love; he no more seems to consider them immoral and obscene. The western societies are no more bound by the old rigid codes and laws regulating marriage and sex.

5. It is observed that society, in some respects, makes its people suffer due to certain social standards. Michael Henchard becomes a victim because he suffers dreadful consequences for failing to follow the social standards. Henchard asks his stepdaughter not to behave beneath her actual social class, even though he and his family were at one time a part of the lower class. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* reflects his views about the upper and common working classes of the Victorian era.
6. The study also reveals that the protagonist of this novel promotes herself to a higher level in the eyes of the Victorian society through her bravery, survival, chastity, and honesty. For example, Tess refuses to marry Angel Clare immediately when he discloses his love for her.

7. The study also reveals that there are some autobiographical elements in his novels which he uses aesthetically and enhances the beauty of his novels. There are some similarities between Thomas Hardy's life and Jude's life. For example, Hardy studied Greek on his own, as Jude does. Jude was a stonemason who does church reconstruction like Hardy's father.

8. The analysis of this novel shows that Thomas Hardy has presented Jude as a weak individual against the rigid and conservative social systems of the Victorian era. He faces problem after problem since he belongs to the working class. For example, he eventually fails in learning due to the people like Sue and Richard Phillotson around him.

9. The analysis also reveals that the institution of marriage in the Victorian society ruins the life of most of the characters, including Jude. For instance, Arabella Donn's hypocrisy and tricks are the main causes for Jude's tragedy. She traps Jude into marriage by telling him a lie that she is pregnant by him.

6.2.2 Characters as victimizers in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

1. The study observes that Henchard is also responsible for his own fate despite the workings of blind fate, the occurrences of chance, and the vagaries of a hostile natural environment. If he had not sold his wife in a fit of drunken self-pity, the painful events later in his life would not have occurred. Other examples are his ill will to ruin Farfrae as well as the way he responds to the natural disasters such as the corn factor.
2. The analysis reveals that sometimes characters play greater roles than fate to bring tragedy into the lives of other characters. Characters become victims because of other characters in the novel. It is sometimes due to bad luck or because of wrong decisions. For example, Henchard is at the fair at Weydon Priors with Susan and baby Elizabeth Jane. He commits the mistake of drinking too much alcohol and in his drunken state decides to sell his wife for five guineas to a sailor. Consequently, Susan and baby Elizabeth-Jane become the victims of his actions.
3. It is observed that acts committed in the past play a dominant role in destroying the future of his characters. The past memory affects the lives of the protagonist of the novel as well as the other characters. The ghost represents the gloomy past of Henchard.

For example, the gladiator is killed in a battle and the woman is strangled and burned. Therefore, these past ghosts work against Henchard and his wife, Susan, because they hunt them to the idea of destruction. As a result, Henchard loses the battle with his pride, and Susan is strangled by Michael Henchard's control.

4. The study observes that in this novel, Michael Henchard proves to be cruel when he wishes to marry Luccetta while Susan is dying. This shows how Henchard sometimes becomes responsible for his own downfall as well as for Susan's sorrow and suffering.
5. The study also observes that Lucetta's temperament makes other characters victims in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. For example, instead of being cautious like Farfrae, she openly shows interests in the stranger Abel Whittle. In spite of loving Frafrae, she flirts with Abel Whittle openly.
6. The study observes that Tess is considered a murderer according to the beliefs of her ancestors since she is responsible for the death of the horse because she was in charge of controlling the horse. Thus, Tess becomes a victim since her ancestors play a negative role in her life.

7. The analysis of the study shows that Tess is a pure woman by heart and behavior, still, she becomes morally unacceptable to her society when Alec seduces and rapes her. In fact, she is innocent and helpless, but she suffers because of Alec's immoral act.
8. The research shows that in most of Thomas Hardy's novels, he opposes the rigid and controversial religious rules of his day. He reinforces the pure, simple, and easy religious rules rather than the complicated ones. Angel Clare represents the immorality of religion. Hardy refers to the sense of inhumanity which is clearly proved in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.
9. The study observes that the members of the churches are somewhat responsible for ruining the life of their people in the Victorian era. For example, Parson Tringham, who is one of the members of the churches, is one of the trouble makers in Tess's life. Through Parson Tringham, the truth of the d'Urberville family ancestry is revealed.
10. The study also observes that Thomas Hardy shows how false institutions deceive people into applying the rigid and controversial rules of the churches. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* mainly deals with the social and religious problems of the Victorian era. It teaches the readers a great lesson in perceiving the truth behind the hypocrisy of the rules of the churches which were followed by the people of the Victorian era.

11. The analysis shows that men of the Victorian society consider women weaker than men. Women were treated negatively and considered as having weakness in their sexual desires. This becomes clear through the behaviors of Alec and Angel towards Tess.
12. The study also shows that Tess's weakness is another cause behind her downfall. She is not aware of the deceptive world around her; she is only thinking of a way to support her family and thereby sacrifices herself for the sake of her family.
13. The study observes that heritage is responsible to some extent in making Tess a victim. After the death of Alec, Tess reconciles with Angel Clare, and they decide to travel far away in order not to be captured by the police. During their travels, they face hardships. Their reconciliation becomes short-lived.
14. The study also observes that the common class to which Tess belongs is one of the reasons behind the failure of her life. Tess fails to adjust her life with her peers in Chaseborough since she is neither part of her peers' lower class nor of the aristocracy of the d'Urberville family.

15. The study also reveals that chance and coincidence equally play dominant roles in destroying Tess's future. By chance Tess's father discovers that his family comes from the oldest and wealthiest family in England, which partially causes further consequences.
16. The study observes that the failure in Jude's intellectual ambition is one of the causes behind his downfall because he has been left lonely by Richard Phillotson in Marygreen.
17. The study also observes that poverty brings disaster in Jude's family life. Jude becomes financially unstable as the responsibilities of caring for his children suddenly increases. This factor puts Jude in trouble because he could not find lodging for his children.
18. The study of this novel shows that society becomes responsible to ruin the happy lives of its characters. Love relationships such as those between Jude and the two women, Sue and Arabella, are impossible because the rules of the churches in the Victorian society did not accept the idea of being in love without marriage.
19. The study of this novel also shows that Thomas Hardy opposes immature decisions to quickly get married right after the first meeting. Hastily decided marriages lead to short-lived relationships which eventually make the couples victims as seen in the immature marriage between Jude and Arabella.

20. The study observes that Jude and Sue become victims because they refuse to follow the social and religious norms of the era, which is totally unacceptable to the people in the Victorian era.
21. The study reveals that Christminster itself is one of the causes of Jude's tragedy. When he could not become one of the students of this university, it tortures him mentally and psychologically. Therefore, although Christminster is the place of enlightenment for him, it has a touch of supernatural power which contributes to his downfall.

6.2.3 Nature as victimizer in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*.

1. Hardy displays a great power in depicting nature in all forms. He does not glorify nature like Wordsworth but he puts hard facts of nature very vividly and effectively with all minute details before his readers. He is very objective in his description of nature.
2. Hardy employs nature to portray the moods of his characters. The changes in weather and seasons reflect the state of minds of his characters. Nature and people often match in his novels. This is termed as pathetic fallacy.

3. Nature is an active character in his novels. Nature is often seen and presented as an agent of destiny. She is often unsympathetic and hostile to the characters of his novels. Egdon Heath is a very significant and powerful character which determines the fate of other characters in *The Return of the Native*. Nature often plays a negative role in victimizing the characters in all his novels. The study shows that nature is considered to be a living force with a will and purposes in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. It is also considered to be the silent and ironic spectator of the human beings by which people face their fate.
4. The study also examines how nature affects the mood of the people in Casterbridge and thus it brings destruction into their lives. For example, the domination of nature on the townspeople is responsible for the skimmity-ride which makes Lucetta and Henchard become victims.
5. The study observes that nature has been presented in a state of decay in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Features such as the rotten leaves and the dust clouds reflect the pessimistic states of the characters which further lead them toward tragedy in their lives.
6. Nature is closely linked to human life. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* presents a wealth of naturalistic details. It shows a sight of rural life which is nearly linked to nature.

7. The study also shows that the characters in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* are left to the devices of the supernatural powers of nature which are created by God. The supernatural powers affect the lives of people negatively when the powers of nature become hostile and through this, the people face their destiny.
8. The study also reveals that Hardy uses a very powerful imagery from nature to describe human beings. Jude is shown as a victim like a pig. He cannot escape from the clutches of Arabella who keeps pigs. His marriage with her turns him in to a miserable pig, which is eventually going to be butchered for human consumption.

6.3 Pedagogical Implications of the Present Study

Pedagogical implications are related to the usefulness of the study for pedagogical purposes. The analysis of the present study will definitely be a great help to students and teachers to understand Thomas Hardy's novels. It will also be a great help to understand the concept of victims - victimizers in the Victorian novel and specifically in Thomas Hardy's novels. The study will aid to the understanding of Thomas Hardy's philosophy of life and his techniques of characterization in his novels.

The present interpretations given in the study will also be a great help to the readers in looking at the benefits of the contemporary theories and views of the victim- victimizer concept. Thus, readers, students, and teachers of English literature will be aware of the trouble maker who is the victimizer as well as taking care of the innocent who easily becomes a victim. Finally, this study will help the readers to be optimistic in spite of the difficulties they face in their lives. It will further enhance the understanding of his novels and enable learners to appreciate them in new light and enjoy them from a different perspective.

6.4 Scope for further Study

The present study will serve as a platform for possible closely related studies from the angle of the role of society, characters, and nature in other novels of Thomas Hardy. Another appropriate topic for further study can be the role of religion in the Victorian novel and its effects on the characters.

Novelists like Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Emily Bronte, George Eliot, and others can be studied for this purpose. As the Victorian age is well-known as an age of revolution in the fields of industrialization and prosperity, the researchers can also do research work on the effects of industrialization and prosperity on the lives of people of the Victorian era.

6.5 Conclusion

This study is a humble attempt to probe one aspect of Thomas Hardy's selected novels. The researcher does not claim that this is the only approach to study the novelist as there are numerous ways to investigate the novels of the writer. Furthermore, there are ample possibilities of research in the concerned field from various angles.

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